MEMOIRS

OF

THE LATE

MRS. ROBINSON,

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

WITH SOME POSTHUMOUS PIECES.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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THE SYLPHID.

Several Numbers of this Periodical Work appeared in a Morning Newſpaper, and Mrs. Robinson had prepared and arranged the whole for ſeparate publication previous to her laſt illneſs.

THE SYLPHID.

No. I.

MR. EDITOR,

THIS paper is addreſſed to you, from one who has long been an inviſible Spy over the actions of unconſcious mortals; the name which I place at the concluſion of my introductory paſſport, will ſufficiently declare the powers of my important miſſion. I am one of thoſe Aerial Beings to whom deſtiny has given the clue which is, by fabulous writers, denominated *the thread of fate*. I have the gift of inviſibility, as well as a preſcient knowledge, which enables me to regulate the chequered tablet of human events, and to comment, without fear, on the dangers, the actions, and the varying evolutions in the ſcenes of ſublunary viciſſitude.

I am

I am allowed the power of changing my form, as ſuits the obſervation of the moment. I can aſſume the minute exterior of the ſmalleſt inſect, or *perſonate*, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, the moſt inanimate objects: breathe in the flowers of ſummer, or direct my unerring ſhaft from the moſt minute particle of froſt that hangs upon the wings of Boreas: I can ſkim on the auſtral breeze, or make my bounding couch on a green wave. I can watch on the pillow of diſeaſe, fan the feveriſh cheek with my enamelled pinions; or repulſe the bold intruding zephyr that haſtens to ſipnectar from the lips of beauty.

Often do I penetrate even the moſt obſcure receſſes of political as well as amorous intrigue. I liſten with equal ſcepticiſm to the Lover's vows and the Courtier's profeſſions. I preſide at the toilets of the whole race of women, from the thrice eſſenced Ducheſs to the Dulcinea of St. Giles's: and I find that, with a difference of *manner* only, their habits, purſuits, inclinations and frailties, are nearly ſimilar! Sometimes I ſteal into the garret of a poet; and, by ſkimming with light wings over

over his buſy brain, impregnate his mind with all the fantaſtic forms which, at times, I am permitted to exhibit. I then glide through the cabinet of the Politician, and hear him rehearſe his parliamentary oration; I ſee him beat his head, and I hear him rave againſt men and meaſures, while ſelf-intereſt lays her magnet on his heart, and palſies all its moſt honourable feelings.

In the reſemblance of a fly, I wander over the repaſt of the epicure. I diſcover amidſt luxuries, purchaſed at a prodigal expence, unnumbered ſtores of anticipated diſeaſes. I ſip of thoſe goblets which bear to the lips of fated revellers, wines, whoſe flavour and perfume might have vied with thoſe of the Phœnician grape! I there diſcover poiſons, which, without the antidote which temperance alone can ſupply, are inevitably deſtructive. In the likeneſs of a waſp, I haunt the bowers of infidelity; and, by the menace of my ſting, alarm the boſom of half yielding frailty. I ſometimes inflict a wound upon the lip of deceit, juſt as it is preparing to profane the name of Love I awaken, with my drony ſong, the ſlumber-

ſlumbering huſband; who, at ſun-riſe, ſleeps on a ſmooth pillow, while his adventurous partner is gathering thorns to ſprinkle it, on the more than hemlock verdure of a gaming table! By the yellow, gloſſy graces of my form, I remind the rapacious miſer of his gold; then ſuddenly aſſuming the night-beetle's ſable habit, I ſhew him the ſemblance of his hidden heart. In the grey garb of a muſquito, I preſent the Monk his outward, humble mien; while with my poiſon I engrave upon his breaſt the miſery of ſuperſtition. To divert the bold Projector from his purpoſe, I weave the envenomed ſpider's web; and while he builds his airy caſtle on the ruins of his country, I invoke a kindred zephyr to deſtroy my flimſy fabric; he ſees the allegorical deſtruction, and wavers from his purpoſe.

Sometimes to favour an ill-treated Lover, I aſſiſt in the important myſteries of omens; and flit upon the burning bar, in blackened fragments, to tell a ſtranger coming. To fright the Goſſip who has ſlept, when her ſick patient ſuffered pain, I have twiſted the long winding-

winding-ſheet; and ſhe has learnt to be more wary in her watchings. Where poverty has pinched the heart, I have bounced from the fire, a purſe of promiſed treaſure; chirped like the cricket in the chimney corner to announce a wedding-day; or tickled, with inviſible breathings, the elbow of a love-ſick maiden, ſure ſign that ſhe would change her bed-fellow. I have often, as a huge fly, obtruded myſelf on the plate of an Epicure, who, having feaſted himſelf to the very verge of apoplexy, was preparing the laſt ſacrifice to gluttony: the ſight of me has ſickened his imagination, and, by putting a period to his meal, I have protracted his exiſtence.

I have aſſumed the orient colours of the butterfly; and while the giddy, gay coquet has viewed me as an emblem of her beauteous ſelf, I have ſuddenly become a grub, to teach her the leſſon of mortality. I have purred like one of the tabby ſpecies, to ſhew the inſtability of friendſhip. I have murmured, like the ring-dove, to evince that conſtancy is flown to ſolitudes and ſhades. I have, in the deformity of the bat, preſented to view the moping

moping Antiquarian, who ſecludes himſelf from the haunts of man, to vegetate amidſt the ruins of inexorable time, uſeleſs and unſocial. Thus do I change my form and my purſuits as rapidly as thought; and thus, from time to time, will I ſkim over this buſy ſcene in the inviſible ſhape of an obſerving

SYLPHID.

Mount-Ether, Oct. 21, 1799.

No. II.

MR. EDITOR,

IN my introductory paper I endeavoured to give you ſome account of my powers, and to prepare you for the ſpecies of information which you are to expect during my ſojourn on this part of the globe. I already perceive that my occupations will be as various as my zeal ſhall be indefatigable: but, before I commence my labours, I think it will amuſe you to know what

what I have already done in my journey of obſervation, ſince the ſummer morning when I firſt found myſelf newly awakened to life, in the painted receſſes of a tulip, to that dawn when I reſted my airy form on the white cliffs of this wave-circled iſland.

Know then, Mr. Editor, that I firſt breathed the aromatic gales on the ſun-gilded altitudes of Sicily. I glanced my ſtarry eyes over the diſtant proſpect, and ſhaking the dew from my tranſparent wings, I found that they were impregnated with celeſtial odours. I then perceived that I was gifted with the powers of motion, which rivalled the velocity of the morning breeze; and, as I paſſed near the topmoſt bough where the mother bird neſtled with yer young, I diſcovered, by their repoſe, that I was inviſible.

From Sicily I croſſed the waves to the luxurious plains of Italy. I hovered over the ſhrines dedicated to bigotry and veiled by ſuperſtition. I ſoiled with my tears the relique which pious fraud had rendered ſacred; and I turned with horror from the pride-pampered Prieſt, who bartered with the feeble for their ſoul's *fiat!*

fiat! In the ſaloon of the Nobles, I floated amidſt the perfumes of Arabia, over the moſt coſtly feaſts, or ſtretched ſupine in the rich feſtoons of a ſilken canopy, I liſtened to the deep-drawn reſpiration of full-fated luxury, while diſeaſe and death ſtood centinels at its pillow.

I then explored the clay-reared cottage of the laborious peaſant: I beheld him on a hard and thinly covered pallet, weary with the toils of a hot vintage, yet ſleeping ſoundly: I heard his ſoft breath as it gently raiſed his ſcorched boſom, and I ſaw the ſmile upon his lip which beſpoke an unſullied conſcience! Happy peaſant! more envied, even in thy poverty and toil, than all the ſons of ambition, in the very pride of conqueſt, and plenitude of dominion.

From Italy I croſſed the Alpine hills; and ſailed on the ſun-beam over ſolitudes of ſnow, where mortal feet had never wandered. Terrific altitudes! ſacred to the God of Nature! more inſtructive to the philoſophic mind than all the ſophiſtry of man, or all the leſſons of ſanctified law-givers.

I then took up my abode in the intricate mazes

mazes of Paris and Verſailles—I was, by turns, the obſerver of the pleaſurable haunts, and the political cabinet. I beheld, with ſorrow, the encroachments of Profuſion; and anticipated the horrors of Anarchy, while I traced the rapid progreſs of Oppreſſion.

I then winged my way to the habitation of the proud Spaniard. I there ſaw Dullneſs dreſſed in the ſpecious garb of ſelf-importance; Oſtentation, aſſuming the celeſtial ſemblance of Generoſity; and Jealouſy dipping her deſtructive poignard in the tears of captive beauty. Often did I compreſs my ſlender form to enter the latticed window, where the blackeſt and fineſt eyes on this terreſtrial ſphere gazed dejectedly on the chain of wedded tyranny; while the ſoft ſigh of deſpondency, ſtealing over the fevered lip of love, repelled and drew me on at pleaſure.

From the dominion of unmeaning pride I croſſed the abyſs of waters, aſſailed by the wild ſurf, and buffeted by the reſiſtleſs breath of the tumultuous Equinox. In my acquatic voyage I marked many a Britiſh Tar, fearleſs in the very heat of danger! I beheld the nobleſt

nobleſt of Valour's ſons undaunted amidſt the ſulphur of deſolating warfare: I took my lofty ſeat on the top-maſt of a floating bulwark, where, blackened by the ſmoke of war, the Britiſh flag waved defiance to the world; while the ſcene below was ſtained with blood, and the pauſe of thundering conteſt was awfully filled up by the groans of the agoniſed and dying!—I ſhuddered, and purſued my aerial journey.

As ſoon as I had dipped my weary pinions in the white waves, and drank the æthereal ſpirit of the breezes, I continued my flight towards the lofty ſhores of Albion; ſhores rendered ſacred by the birth of the immortal Alfred; protected by the hardy zeal of its bold Barons; and formed by the hand of Nature, to defend her ſons againſt the attacks of foreign foes.

Far and wide have been my wanderings; on the hot ſands of the eaſtern world, beneath the vertical and ſcorching beam, I have ſeen the tyranny of wealth lording it over the defenceleſs native. I have liſtened to the cries of inſulted nature, while the lengthened cavalcade

valcade groaned with the ſpoils of inſatiable plunder. The burning ſun has ſhed its ſhafts on the ſcorched camel, while his weary limbs have yielded to the burthen of uncounted treaſures! Even at that moment the ſon of boundleſs rapacity has ſmiled! The glow of ſhameleſs triumph has deepened the bronze of his clime-faded cheek, and his heart has beat healthfully, while famine, unchecked, has been deſolating kingdoms.

From the ſun's hotteſt clime I winged my way to the black deſarts of the frozen pole. I have crept into the ſnow cavern, and liſtened to the uncouth yell of uncultivated ſavages; I found them ſocial, though unſophiſticated; I beheld no ſanguinary warfare; I heard no ſycophantic adulation; I witneſſed no empty pride, no poiſoned oſtentation; no hatred ſpringing from envy and deceit; no party ſpirit, contending for pre-eminence; no ſpy that ſtabbed the peace of unſuſpecting patriotiſm. The kindling fire illumined the long icicles, which, during a ſix months night, hung gliſtening from the Indian's dome; his limbs were ſtrong, and ſinewy, he knew not the enervating

ing miſchief, luxury: his eye looked forward with a penetrating firmneſs, the effect of conſcious freedom! I examined his hovel; it was not ſtored with the treaſures of his neighbour; I hovered around his his bed, formed of the hides of animals; it was bleſt with tranquil ſlumber. I marked his eye; it was illumined by valour, tempered by inſtinctive love; it was the clear but ſteady lamp of an unſhackled ſoul!

I croſſed the wild Euphrates; ſported on the golden ſands of the pearly Ganges; hovered on the black pall of night, as it veiled the polar deſert; and ſwept with hurried wings along the Caſpian Ocean. I flitted on the white foam of the impetuous Rhone; imbibed the muſky vapours ariſing from the ſilver Arno; and ſipped the ſweets of ſummer flowers, as they opened to meet the ſun, on the Etrurian meads. On the Sabine hills I watched the yellow Tiber, while fancy brought to my view the grandeur of ancient Rome, before its glories were faded by the breath of tyrants. I traverſed the borders of the Nile, while my enamelled wing ſnatched new luſtre from

from the eye of valour, and my light form ſported amidſt the laurels of a NELSON!

Over the Black Sea I followed the navies of the voluptuary, whoſe power was confeſſed alike in the cabinets of politics and love. I there ſaw the coſtly gems, the gilded paſſports to the heart, debaſe its beſt feelings, and purchaſe its degradation. I hovered over the poor remains of unlamented greatneſs, till I beheld with rapture the arm of power ſtretched forth to emancipate the child of valour,* the bold inheritor of Nature's wreathe, won in the cauſe of freedom; and placed upon his brow by the hand of Fortitude!

I have ſince flown rapidly over the thiſtled hills of Scotia, where pride receives a leſſon from adverſity; and where conſcience, beneath a tottering roof of ſtate, whiſpers to the reflecting ſoul, "Such is the reward of boundleſs ſenſuality:" I have alſo traverſed the Hibernian ſhores; ſhuddered at the effects of lawleſs fury, and dropped a tear on the records of ferocity,—while Religion wept, and Reaſon trembled with anticipated horrors.

* Koſciuſko.

Behold

Behold me at the cloſe of the Eighteenth Century, in the metropolis of England. Here I pauſe to repleniſh my ſhattered wings, and to obtain new ſources of important information. It ſhall now be my taſk to explore the haunts of artificial beings; to watch, unſeen, at the toilets of coquets, in the chambers of prudes; at the altars of pious hypocrites; in the vortex of diſſipation; on the couch of indolence; in the gloomy cloſet of avarice, and the ſuperb temple of the unbluſhing peculator. I will draw forth merit; protect unfriended genius; unveil *pretended* chaſtity; goad with the thorn of conſcious reproof the oſtentatious boſom; and expoſe the ſpecious violator of domeſtic joy, the oppreſſor of the unhappy! Neither the eloquence of a Cicero, the force of a Demoſthenes, the philoſophy of a Plato, the tyranny of a Nero, nor the graces of a Helen (were ſuch perſons now in exiſtence), ſhould direct the wanderings, influence the juſtice, interrupt the vigilance, or ſilence the reproof, of the ever watchful and unwearied

SYLPHID.

No. III.

SINCE I wrote to you laſt, Mr. Editor, I have been perplexed almoſt beyond the reſiſting powers of fortitude; I have witneſſed ſcenes, and explored characters, at once ſo ſpecious, and ſo deſtructive, that I was almoſt diſpoſed to queſtion my own exiſtence. But in order to vent the ſorrows of my full breaſt, and to convince you, that though I bear a ſupernatural form, my feeling and affections are human, I ſhall endeavour to paint the miſeries I have contemplated.

I have made an aerial journey over many places. I beheld in every country, mothers, wives, and relatives of all deſcriptions, mourning in hopeleſs and unavailing agony! I gazed with horror on mutilated limbs; I viſited hoſpitals overcharged with the ſick; and chambers, *obſcure* chambers, filled with the dying! Yet I found, upon enquiry, that the ſufferers were innocent of any crime againſt ſociety; that they were the mere ſprings of a vaſt ma-

chine, which, by their exertions, was neceſſarily kept in motion. And, are they no more regarded? are they left to periſh? muſt they quit their toilſome taſk, unlamented? Even ſo! For what do they encounter death? For the wreathe of glory. Do *they* enjoy it? Thrives it on *their* brows? does it ſhelter their habitations from the blaſt of poverty, or does it bloom to decorate their graves? I dread to hear theſe queſtions anſwered.

I have viſited the romantic ſcenery of the Welſh mountains; I there invoked the ſpirit of imagination, and beheld a long train of dauntleſs viſions, ſuch as are deſcribed by the inſpired and magic pen of GRAY! There, while I beheld

"The ſteep of Snowden's ſhaggy ſide,"

and pauſed upon the margin of

"Old Conway's foaming flood,"

my enraptured fancy caught the ſtrains of

"High-born Hoel's harp, and ſoft Llewellyn's lay!"

while Truth inſtructed me to contemplate the circles of modern refinement; the *petite maitres* of faſhionable life; the tinſel abodes of vitiated

ed taſte; and the inſipid phalanx of noble, *ſoi-diſant*, *literati*.

I repaired to the abode of neglected genius. I beheld the genuine ſons and daughters of the Muſes, pining in obſcure poverty, and labouring inceſſantly for a ſcanty pittance. No ſplendours decorated their neglected habitation; no luxuries were ſeen on the board of weary toil. Ah! race, neglected by the proud, unhonoured by the ignorant! TIME will record your names and conſecrate your labours! Your works will give luſtre to his wings, while they level with the duſt, the lofty monuments of *wealth* and *oſtentation!*

I arreſted my flight on the altar of that temple conſecrated to THE DIVINITY! There I ſaw the lean, half-ſtarved deputy, performing the ſacred function, while his full-fed maſter ſlumbered in ſlothful luxury. I ſaw, around him, what I conſidered as the overplus of plenty; but inſtinct ſhortly told me, that it was the hoard of extorted claims, wreſted from the children of labour and credulity!

I entered the ſaloon of the Aſiatic; I ſaw profuſion decorating the repaſt of vulgar pride, and

and falſehood diſpenſing her ſmiles, while adulation endeavoured, vainly endeavoured, to heal the wounded ſpirit of it's patron. I accompanied the gilded idol to his midnight couch; I ſaw him ſtart, aghaſt! I heard him groan convulſively; around him roſe an hoſt of pale and bleeding victims! they ſhook his coſtly canopy, emboſſed with gems and gold, while their hollow voices murmured, "*Caitiff*, "*ſleep no more!*"

I then paſſed the portico of ONE, whoſe graces of perſon and of mind ſtamped him of Nature's firſt order! I obſerved his heart beat with thoſe affections, which had led his footſteps to the paths of pleaſure; while Envy threw the thorns of malice in his way to perplex and wound him. It was his deſtiny to be placed ON AN EMINENCE, where all eyes beheld him: like the Sun he dazzled, and his prying obſervers found he had ſmall ſpecks, which they magnified with the hope of diminiſhing his luſtre. I then peeped into the book of fate, and with joy I beheld the progreſs of his deſtiny! around him beamed a thouſand conſtellations! Hope ſmiled, as ſhe obſerved the

the *demon*, Diſcord, vaniſh! and the angel PEACE, as ſhe ſhook the tears of memory from the laurels of the valiant, pointed towards that thrice columned Temple, which Britiſh Virtue ſhall render invulnerable!

This ſplendid viſion being conſigned to the immortal hand of Freedom, ſhe conſecrated it amidſt the united plaudits of Religion, Wiſdom, Patriotiſm: while Time conferred the office of its biographer on the inviſible, but indefatigable,

SYLPHID.

No. IV.

MR. EDITOR,

TURNING my reſtleſs wings from gloomy objects, as ſoon as I had diſpatched my truſty Zephyr with the laſt paper, I ſet out on a new purſuit, in the brilliant ſcenes of diſſipated folly. I had witneſſed in various climes, the caprices

caprices, or rather the diſtortions, produced by a Sylph, known to the trifling and unthinking by the appellation of Faſhion; though ſometimes miſtaken for a more refined and delicate Spirit, which in the purer regions we denominate Taſte. As theſe contending and almoſt equally acknowledged powers are frequently conſulted by the faireſt votaries of vanity and pleaſure, I ſhall, for the inſtruction of the lovely and *rational* part of the attractive ſex, endeavour to deſcribe their different attributes.

Faſhion is a Sylph of fantaſtic appearance, the illegitimate offspring of Caprice (for Faſhion is of no ſex). It was firſt awakened to life by the Zephyr of a May morning, bearing on it's wings the fleeting fragrance of the moſt fragile bloſſoms. Its nurſe was the Camelion; air-nouriſhed, and perpetually changing its appearance. Placed on the topmoſt bough of a tall poplar, it learned to wave with every gale, while its cradle was over-arched by a rainbow, the emblem of itſelf, gaudy, varying, tranſient, and unſubſtantial.

Cheriſhed into ſtrength, it ſought the buſy ſcenes

ſcenes of gallantry and fancy. Its firſt reſting place was amidſt the falſe ringlets of a *Gallic coquet*. It has flitted on Arabian perfumes, over the boſoms of celebrated beauties, even from the earlieſt periods. For a time it preſided among the Athenian women, laughing Philoſophy to ſcorn. Sometimes it viſited the temples of Roman gallantry, while Roman hardihood bowed before its altar! It has been known to rule the deſtiny of Gallic monarchs; to revel in the huge ruff and ſtiffened deformity of the vain Engliſh Elizabeth; and it even ſtamped the paſſport to preferment, during the reign of the Second Charles, in the *then* licentious Court of Britain!

Faſhion patroniſed the ſavage Hottentots in their diſguſting decorations; cramped the fine feet of the Chineſe; and revelled in the ſhadows of their half-cloſed heavy eye-lids. Faſhion commended the prim coquets of Vandyke, and the voluptuous forms, the languiſhing eyes of the *canvas-breathing ſenſualiſt*, Sir Peter Lely.

Faſhion is a diſtorted Sylph, decked with flowers, feathers, tinſel, jewels, beads, and all the

the gariſh profuſion of degenerated fancy. Its emblems are the tulip and the poppy, glaring and pernicious to the energies of intellect. It makes idiots of its votaries; and yet we ſometimes ſee the wiſeſt governed by its influence. Even the old and the ugly confeſs its power, at the very moment when they feel that it is the uſurper of that magic wand, which ſhould only be directed by the hand of Taſte; but Faſhion governs with imperious command, while taſte attracts the ſoul by intuitive faſcination.

Taſte is a mild and beauteous Sylph, of Grecian extraction, ſimply but elegantly adorned! Her veſt is neither gaudy nor fantaſtic. Her brows are crowned with a profuſion of Heaven's gifts; and her flight never extends beyond the boundaries of Nature. Her emblems are the white roſe, bending in a graceful curve over the modeſt, vale-born lily. It was originally her office to fold the drapery of her native veſtments; and to braid the gloſſy treſſes of Cercaſſian virgins: ſhe preſided over the poetry of Sappho, ſhe aſſiſted in the ſculpture of the Medicean Venus; gave the warm glow

glow to the pencil of Claude de Lorraine; grouped the figures of a Michael Angelo; and blended the colours which immortalized the breathing pencil of Titian. It was her's to illumine the mind of the Britiſh Reynolds! as it will be her office to conſecrate his memory!

Alas! Mr. Editor, how rarely have I found her in the mazy circles of modern refinement. How popular is her rival Sylph, fantaſtic Faſhion! A few mornings ſince, almoſt frozen by the winter air, and nearly ſuffocated by the fogs of the metropolis, I entered a *balcony* window (for Faſhion has of late waged war with Reaſon in the ſchool of Architecture, in defiance of climate and of atmoſphere)! On a ſudden I found myſelf in the dreſſing-room of a celebrated beauty. Heavens! what a ſcene! Where, where was deſerted Nature? What miſerable efforts of art were ſubſtituted for the ſublimities of genius. The walls were covered with caricatures. The ceiling and pannels deformed by ſphynxes and centaurs, the monſters of a fantaſtic imagination. The chairs and ſophas were too ſplendid for comfort,

fort, and too ſlight for uſe. The blazing coal-fire ſhed its unwholeſome vapours on the forced produce of the hot-houſe; and the preſiding goddeſs of the coſtly temple was ſighing with *ennui*, even in the midſt of magnificence and prodigality.

What a ſtrange *melange* of luxury and inſipidity! What ſophiſticated minds muſt ſuch beings poſſeſs! How uſeleſs are they in the vaſt ſcale of human organization, and how little does their exiſtence benefit or adorn ſociety! But ſoft: I am menaced by the angry Sylph, whoſe myſteries I am preparing to unravel! Faſhion already arms her buſy wing with a thouſand arrows! I muſt conſult the power which has given me my aerial miſſion, and if I am permitted to reveal the ſecrets of the *reigning favourite*, I will proceed in my diſcoveries; and they ſhall furniſh obſervations for the fifth paper, from the never weary and faithful

SYLPHID.

No. V.

I HAVE paſſed the ordeal of Faſhion's phalanx! and again I reſume my taſk of obſervation. The refined Sylphid, Taſte, though deprived of the power ſhe once held over the minds of enlightened mortals, ſtill aſſerts her empire in the thoughts, manners, and deciſions of the diſcriminating few. Yet Faſhion is a potent adverſary, and faſhion will oppoſe me; the inſects, flitting amidſt the thin vapours of their ſhort-lived day, will attempt to miſlead me, by their dazzling *ignis fatuus*; or to ſink me amidſt the ſwift vortex of deſtructive diſſipation. But, Mr. Editor, I ſhall ſhake my untiring pinions in defiance of their efforts; and, prompted by the fine ſpirit, Truth, I ſhall ſtill rely for ſupport on her ſtrong parent, Reaſon.

I laſt took leave of you to contemplate the breakfaſt-room of a celebrated beauty, round whom myriads of human inſects poured forth pœans of adulation, though her lovely grand-

children

children already began to lisp her praises. I observed the fair one, like Pope's *Belinda*, unveiling that mysterious altar which was destined to give her almost a new creation. I saw a busy agent of the presiding Deity, Omnipotent Fashion, compressing her luxuriant tresses to the compact circumference of a cocoa-nut; first essaying the jetty scratch; then the wavy flaxen; and then the neatly braided, warmly glowing auburn. A second smiling imp of mischief tinged her elbows, chin, and ears, with a rosy hue; a third dyed her cheeks and lips with a vermilion poison; a fourth enlarged her falling shoulders to an unnatural expansion; a fifth supplied her bosom with a prepostrous protuberance; and a sixth threw over her form an almost transparent drapery, which left every charm distinctly visible to the prying eyes of vulgar curiosity.

Thus metamorphosed, thus divested of her natural graces (for beauty smiled in her features, and played about her form without the aid of art); I saw the lovely misguided pupil of Fashion's school bending before a flattering mirror. I observed her affecting a thousand

strange

ſtrange grimaces; now languiſhing with a kind of liſtleſs apathy; now fixing the broad ſtare of polite effrontery; and now aſſuming the vacant gaze of confirmed idiotiſm. I heard her loudly clatter, in ſounds rapidly unintelligible, and liſp the moſt inſipid jargon, with a tone ſcarcely articulate. Theſe changes were as ſuddenly aſſumed as the manner which accompanied them. In a moment ſhe was grave and gay; prudiſh and coquetiſh; volatile and reſerved: while ſhe performed each character with an evident facility, which was ſcarcely credible.

On her table (the chimney time-piece pointing the hour of noon) I obſerved a variety of appendages to modern refinement. Novels, dedicated to their preſiding patroneſſes, Dullneſs and Oſtentation! French perfumes, German tranſlations; poems that breathe rancour beneath the maſk of ſatire; criticiſms, the effuſions of diſappointed ſelf-intereſt, or jealous malignity; and travels, that, venturing beyond the limits of probability, were loſt in obſcure mazes, or overpowered by the glooms of a vapid imagination.

Before

Before the fire, on a ſilken cuſhion, ſlept a favourite lap-dog; while a French milliner diſplayed the neweſt Pariſian caprices, and an emigrant *Abbè* received ten pounds for a ſmall packet of the laſt imported coſmetics. I obſerved the fair enthuſiaſt gazing with adoring eyes on the cap of Madame Tallien; extoling the fine attitudes of an Hamilton; embracing with rapture the faſh of Bonaparte, and wondering at the genius and fancy of *Gallic* females, while the neglected literary works of her own illuſtrious countrywomen were conſigned to the miſchievous claws of her favourite kitten, or to the hands of her *French femme de chambre*, for the arrangement of her *papillots!*

I turned from the ſcene of folly and falſe taſte, weary and diſguſted. Paſſing along the veſtibule of the manſion, I obſerved an ingenious artificer, a neglected poet, a half-ſtarved hiſtorian, and a poor country curate, who were inſtantly diſmiſſed by a luſty lacquey, with a brief aſſurance that his Lady was Inviſible! For a moment I felt alarmed, leſt any of thoſe properties which diſtinguiſh our aerial progeny had

had *deſcended* to favour the follies of Faſhion's votaries: but I was ſoon relieved by the intelligent *ſpirit*, Truth, who informed me, that high-bred inſignificance was frequently *inviſible* to the enlightened children of Genius, and the modeſt offspring of Poverty and Virtue!

This intelligence tranquillized the mind though it did not ſatisfy the enquiring ſpirit of the indefatigable

SYLPHID.

No. VI.

MR. EDITOR,

OF all the *non-entities* which diſgrace the temple of ſupreme Faſhion, I have diſcovered none ſo contemptible, as that appendage to exalted rank, vulgarly denominated a Toad-eater! I have found this ſpecies of *reptile* in almoſt every manſion of profligacy and profuſion. I have ſeen their ſmiles at the tables of

of exalted dupes; I have heard them whiſper the arrangement of an *intrigue* to a *falſe wife*, while her huſband has been flattered with the gloſing-title of *Friend*, or *Patron!* I have obſerved this ſeemingly domeſtic aſſociate feaſting at the luxurious table of a man of rank while he ſettled an aſſignation for the favourite of his pleaſures, with a no leſs diſtinguiſhed *enamorato!* At other periods I have known him carrying on an illicit intercourſe with a friend's wife, winning his money at a gaming table, ridiculing his prodigality, condemning his falſe pride, and proclaiming his ignorance, even in the preſence of his moſt intimate aſſociates; at the ſame time that he ſmiled in his face, and, with little leſs than the idolatry of a bigot, extolled him for every Virtue that can adorn Humanity!

It has often aſtoniſhed me to behold men of real underſtanding, the dupes of theſe poiſonous *animalcula*. And yet they have acceſs to the tables of the Wealthy and the Profuſe, while the ſons of Genius are left, in obſcurity, to *periſh!* I have even ſeen women of talents and acknowledged judgment countenance, and

and eſteem ſuch beings, in preference to the more enlightened and candid of that ſex, which nature deſtined to adore them.

A *Toad-eater* is perhaps one of the moſt indolent, and at the ſame time the moſt indefatigable of creatures! He has no occupation, and is nevertheleſs perpetually employed. He has ſeldom any honourable independence, and yet he exiſts in the very vortex of every luxury. He has no ſettled home, but every houſe of *ton* is open to receive him. He is not learned, and yet he gives his opinions with freedom, even on the moſt abſtruſe writings; he is not poliſhed, but he is the cenſor of good breeding; he is not noble, though he vaunts his principles of Ariſtocracy; and, with a pliability that is aſtoniſhing, ſuits his looks, manners, voice, and opinions, to thoſe of the patron on whom he depends for *the day's enjoyments*.

"*Let no ſuch men be truſted*;" they are the ſubtile miſchiefs which undermine the foundation of domeſtic happineſs. They are the ſmooth honeyed poiſons, which contaminate the cup of human felicity. They are the de-

famers of the dupes they feed on; and are only ſerviceable to the depraved and ſenſual. In fact, they are the jackall to the lion; the clown to his motley aſſociate; the monkey, who ſkips and plays about his lofty dromedary; the trumpeter to the *raree-ſhow* of faſhion; the mirror in which *Folly* ſees her own likeneſs; the lacquey, who waits on the vices of his maſter; the flatterer of his indiſcretions, the ſycophant of his weakneſs; the pliant varniſher of that clay which nature ſtamped with dulneſs and inſipidity; the ſeducer of his friend's wife; the pander of his friend's miſtreſs, the peſt of ſociety, and the diſgrace of human nature!

In order to exemplify this opinion, I ſhall at ſome future period give you a minute deſcription of ſuch Toad-eaters, with their patrons and patroneſſes, as I have already met with in ſociety; in order that the prudent may avoid, the rational deſpiſe, and the liberal abhor them. I ſhall alſo, in another paper, give a portrait of a modern *Bear-leader*, perhaps better known to your *unfaſhionable* readers by the name of a *Travelling Tutor*; for,

for, Mr. Editor, during my continental reſearches, I have frequently met with ſuch characters, and they have never failed to excite the ſcorn, or the indignation, of your obſerving

SYLPHID.

No. VII.

MR. EDITOR,

HAVING in my laſt paper given you a ſketch of the domeſtic appendage to high life, commonly denominated a *Toad-eater*, I now beg leave to make ſome comments on that no leſs ſuperficial and degraded perſonage, generally diſtinguiſhed as a woman of *Demi-ton*. The ſort of character I wiſh to deſcribe is to be met with in every ſcene of ſecond-rate ſociety, though ſhe is rarely, if ever, found in the circles of really mental or perſonal importance.

A woman

A woman of *Demi-ton* is no leſs remarkable for her love of notoriety, than for the prominent figure ſhe is ambitious of making, wherever ſhe meets the eye of public obſervation. In a ſmall circle of intimate friends, ſhe never fails to take the lead in converſation —to inform the attentive group of *her* opinions on matters of faſhionable, as well as of political import. "As *I* always ſay," and "it is *my* opinion," are the prefatory ſentences to every point of her diſcourſe; while "*my* judgment is never queſtioned," or, "*my* friends do me the honour to conſult me on moſt occaſions," is the unvarying epilogue to every rhapſody of folly and ſelf-importance.

In a carriage, a woman of *Demi-ton* ſits prominently conſpicuous; at the Theatre ſhe takes the centre ſeat of a front row, where ſhe annoys the actors, and diſturbs the audience by her vulgar and injudicious remarks; while, at frequent intervals, ſhe looks wiſtfully around for attention or for approbation. In the choice of her dreſs ſhe is more gaudy than taſteful, more profuſe than elegant; yet

it

it is always *outré* in its faſhion, and after-date in its propriety.

A woman of *Demi-ton*, being generally a perſon of vulgar extraction, and no leſs vulgar mind, diſdains to aſſociate with thoſe claſſes of people, with whom ſhe was by nature formed to paſs her days. The circles of nobility, the abodes of the enlightened, are cloſed againſt ſuch a companion; ſhe has therefore only to mix with men of rank, by becoming the dependant, and the flatterer of degraded beauty. The houſe of a profeſſed female gameſter, or the carriage of a ſtigmatiſed woman of quality, are the ſcenes of her ſubordinate triumphs; while the one, in return for her countenance and her panygeric, daily repleniſhes her frippery wardrobe: and the other plants a nobleman's carriage at her door every morning, to give her a kind of tinſel ſplendour, whenever ſhe is inclined to receive her poor relations, or *to be at home* to her original claſs of intimate aſſociates.

A woman of *Demi-ton* is loud and inceſſant in her converſation. She arreſts the ſtrongeſt tide of eloquence by the loquacity of

of her tongue, and the impoſing effrontery of her features. She affects an almoſt univerſal knowledge. She is a critic by habit, though her crudition ſwims, like a gaudy weed, on the rough ſtream of an unquiet fancy. She reads the publications of the day, merely to have an opportunity to cenſure; and ſhe keeps a common-place book, as an inexhauſtible fund for her daily converſation. Her habitation is like herſelf, an exhibition of uſeleſs and taſteleſs frippery; and her drawing-room is dreſſed, like a Pariſian *boutique de bijoux*, with the refuſe of auction-rooms, the rewards of flattery, and the trumpery of old-faſhioned caprices; while her table is ſcantily provided, and her parſimony extends even to the privation of comfort, neatneſs, and delicacy.

A woman of *Demi-ton* is always treated to public places; ſhe is particularly fond of attending thoſe whom ſhe makes her dupes to their morning ſhop rambles, where ſhe inſtructs them in purchaſing bargains, at the ſame moment that ſhe faſtens (with *Lynx-like* penetration) on ſuch articles of dreſs as ſhe

ſhe means to accept from her credulous companion. She viſits perpetually ; but at home, excepting during the forenoon, ſhe is generally inviſible. On her chimney are files of viſiting-cards, with the names of perſons to whom ſhe is totally unknown, picked up in her morning perambulations, or ingeniouſly written by herſelf, to give her a kind of domeſtic conſequence. At a Concert, or a Subſcription Ball, ſhe is the leading character; her groteſque finery excites notice ; her loud-toned voice arreſts attention ; and a ſort of dumb aſtoniſhment, verging on contempt, is by her miſtaken for the very rapture of adulation.

At a Watering-place ſhe reſides in an obſcure lodging; but at a Circulating Library, or a Raffle ſhop, ſhe is the very ſoul of notoriety. She there makes her ſarcaſtic comments without *ſenſe*, but ſo replete with *ſound*, that her hearers wonder while they avoid her. If a prize of chance be gained, ſhe admires, gazes, ſighs, wiſhes it had been hers, and ſometimes, by her inuendoes, really makes it ſo. She never fails to attend the public Balls; but always

ways finds an excuſe to depart, before the Maſter of the Ceremonies receives the emolument of his labours: and, to complete the journey of deceptive importance, ſhe returns to the metropolis in a ſtage-coach, to tell all her acquaintances how ſplendidly ſhe has paſſed the ſummer.

I ſhall conclude my paper, with this brief admonition; let the children of GENIUS or of SORROW, the nobly minded, the finely feeling, and the liberally ingenuous, traverſe all the paths through which hope may lead to conſolation; but never let ſuch beings expect kindneſs, friendſhip, ſympathy, or philanthropy, from a woman of *Demi-ton*.

Such is the advice of the watchful and indignant

SYLPHID.

No. VIII.

MR. EDITOR,

I PROMISED, in a former paper, that I would give you a ſketch of a modern *Bear-Leader*; a perſonage generally known, in the circles of the *haut ton*, as a travelling preceptor. It has been with no leſs aſtoniſhment than indignation, that I have contemplated a variety of theſe characters, during my aërial flight over the Continent; and you will probably be no leſs amazed than I was, when I inform you that I have frequently encountered them in the very loweſt ſcenes of the moſt profligate debaſement.

Cuſtom, that omnipotent ruler of buſy life, has long ordained that our younger male branches of Nobility ſhould travel, to explore the manners, and imbibe the vices of foreign climes, before they are initiated in thoſe of their native country. For this purpoſe the juvenile Peer, or the dignified Commoner, is emancipated from the Gothic walls of Eton College,

College, or the muſty chambers of an univerſity, to fly, on the wings of expectant diſſipation, over the rich vales and luxuriant mountains of France and Italy. But as *the hope of the family* is too young to purſue his journey without a monitor, a man of ſlender erudition, invincible effrontery, and pliant morals, is ſelected as the Mentor and the appendage of his peregrinations.

The firſt object of ſuch a dependant is ſelf-intereſt. How is he to make himſelf uſeful to his young pupil; to enhance his claims on his protection; to ſecure his friendſhip; and to increaſe his fortune? By the *art of pleaſing!* —that art ſo zealouſly taught by Cheſterfield, and ſo neceſſary to be practiſed in all the paths of poliſhed ſociety.

Behold the *Bear-leader* and his pupil commencing their journey of improvement; examine the main-ſpring of all their purſuits, and you will ſee the word *Pleaſure* engraved upon it in indelible characters. At Paris the *Boy-traveller* is a conſtant attendant at the *Spectacles*, where the ſeductive graces of French Actreſſes and French Courteſans occupy

cupy his thoughts, and engroſs his attentions. The *Bear-leader* knows all the perſonages of the gay world, having before travelled in a ſimilar capacity. The pupil is, therefore, introduced at the *petit ſoupé* of an *Adeline*, a *L'Ange*, or a *Carline*; and time flies rapidly on the pinions of diſſipation!

From this epocha the young traveller aſſumes a new aſpect, and purſues his *route* towards the clime of refined iniquity, in the character of the *Boy-Libertine*. *Italy!* divine, voluptuous Italy! now opens to his view, replete with vices, abounding with temptations, contaminated by example, and ſanctioned by paſt ages. There he revels in luxury; learns every thing, excepting the language of the country; ſees all things, excepting its antiquities; knows all perſons, excepting the *literati*; viſits all places, excepting the public libraries and galleries; and brings home, as ſpecimens of his taſte and diſcrimination, a few mutilated buſts, purchaſed at an enormous price, the productions of modern ingenuity; a collection of copper medals, artfully rendered inexplicable by the ruſt

ruſt and verdigriſe of a well-contrived impoſture; an Italian Opera girl; a broken conſtitution; and, in order to amaze the circles of expectant ſplendour, the moſt brilliant aſſortment of the laſt Pariſian faſhions!

At the end of a few years the young traveller returns, and preſents himſelf to the expectant eyes of his illuſtrious family; a ſhadowy epitome of every flimſy acquirement; a waſting *memento* of exalted depravity. What are the advantages of his *tour?* It is true that we have ſeen ſome *few* inſtances, where the pupil of *haut ton* has learned the *art of pleaſing*; but he has alſo acquired the ſubtleties of *ſeduction*. He does not find, in Britain, all thoſe vitiated reſources, which France and Italy preſented in a mixed ſociety of the ſexes; therefore, as a ſubſtitute, he flies to the gaming-table, or to a faſhionable club, where he is either robbed by ſharpers, or made the pliant appendage of a political party. He ſupports a foreign muſician, becauſe it is faſhionable to court notoriety; he employs foreign domeſtics, while thoſe of his own country are ſtarving; he patroniſes horſe-racing,

ing, while GENIUS expires unprotected; and he ſquanders his patrimony among the ignorant and debaſed, merely becauſe they cannot fathom the depth of his knowledge; though with fulſome panegyric, or ſilent puſillanimity, they can ſanction indiſcretions.

Not long ſince, being in company with ſuch perſonages as are here deſcribed, a circumſtance gave riſe to the following impromptu:

My Lord, at a dinner, was lying and ſwearing,
Strange deeds, in his travels of folly, declaring;
His Tutor, aſtoniſh'd, with *uplifted eyes*,
To the circle proclaims the farrago of lies!
Yet no word did he utter, for ſilence he knew
Was the ſureſt precaution the Sage could purſue.
But a friend of another inquir'd, "Can it be,
"That a Tutor, with patience, ſuch folly ſhould ſee?
"Indeed, what to make of it, ſcarcely I know,
"Is it *nat'ral?*" The anſwer laconic was, "No!
"'Tis reverſing the order of *Nature*, I ſwear,
"For the *Bear*-LEADER's muzzled, inſtead of the BEAR."

And now, Mr. Editor, accept the zealous good wiſhes of your faithful and devoted

SYLPHID.

No.

No. IX. *

WINGING my way through the regions of infinite ſpace, I late obſerved thee flitting acroſs the five zones that embrace the ſpheroidical form of the earth, while, as it turned eaſtward on its axis, the various nations of its ſurface roſe in quick ſucceſſion to your view. Again I ſaw thee ſeated on a horn of the ſilver moon, contemplating in her varying diſk the ever changeful face of Faſhion, and with judgment nice diſcerning the glare of eccentric folly from the mild radiance of pure and delicate taſte. Your downward flight from thence, inviſible to every eye but mine, I ſtrictly marked, till, ſafe arrived on England's ſea-girt ſhore, I ſaw thee enter Auguſta's ſplendid habitations.—Beauty thy particular care, her temple ſoon thou ſoughteſt, when alighting

* This paper appeared in the ſame newſpaper, and though anonymous, there is every reaſon to believe that it is the production of a gentleman well known in the circles of literature

on

on ———'s toilette, thou didſt miſtake it for the ſhrine of Venus, and in a Britiſh fair acknowledged the grace, the charms, the heavenly panoply, that render the ſweetly-ſmiling Goddeſs irreſiſtible. Become her friend, the guardian-friend of innocence and beauty in this favourite iſle, the ſervices you have rendered have been by me moſt faithfully reported through the world. Here the falſe, the groveling, nauſeous *Toad-eater*, ſmarting beneath thy ſatire, already feels his influence in decay: the babbling thing of *Demi-ton* is huſhed in ſilence; and even the dauntleſs front of the unlettered *Bear-leader*, half-bluſhing, owns the juſtice of your cenſure. Theſe deeds, well executed, deſerve my higheſt praiſe; but know, my charming Sylphid, that the green-eyed Gnome, whom mortals Envy call, and gods, Rodonte, this day preferred her prayer, and thus petitioned to ſupply thy place:

" O Fame omnipotent! what boots thy favoured Sylphid's inviſibility, and whence her preference to me, who, wherever beauty, virtue, honour, merit, glory exiſt, am never abſent?

abſent? who can aſſume each ſhape that ſuits my purpoſe; clothe the murderous intent with a ſmile, hide deſtruction in a dimple, and diſtil the deadly poiſon of my blackening gall in honeyed words. But mark my works, and let them ſpeak for me. On England's fame, her laws and liberties, I fixed the longing eye of France, and thence impelled her down the dreadful ſteep of Revolution. 'Twas I who turned her front to Aſia's golden ſtores. Hence fell Myſore, and with it the brave, perfidious Tippoo. Hence Egypt boaſts its Nile, ſtill more prolific from human gore, and Europe her enſanguined plains. The valiant chieftain, the tempered ſteel, the levelled tube, the neighing ſteed, the warrior well appointed, are of no avail in battle when I contend againſt them. The Imperial eagle's eye I dazzled with Ruſſian glory, and ſent Suwarrow back from Italy's luxurious clime to his native regions of eternal ſnow. The Royal Frederick too, with dread of Auſtrian aggrandizement, I fixed in firm neutrality, immoveable by earthly power or influence. Nor leſs my intereſt in domeſtic life. When late the orient ſun gilded

gilded the ſummit of Bellevoir's princely manſion, uſhering in the day that gave its noble owner to the world; when on eaſy hinge the door flew open to receive each welcome viſitor; my impious tongue did dare to cenſure his generous hoſpitality as thoughtleſs diſſipation, and the lovely hoſteſs, whoſe preſence graced the feſtive board, as the patroneſs of folly. 'Tis true I failed, but in ſuch attempt 'twas glorious even to fall, and now I cite it in proof of my undaunted ſpirit. But for this one defeat I can lay claim to victories unnumbered. I mix in every circle, and in every circle find an inſtrument to my will; but above all do I prefer the antiquated maid and unlettered worldling. Who then like me can tell why beauty pure as Alpine ſnow doth often fade beneath the impoiſoned breath of calumny; or why modeſt merit ſhivers in the ſhade, while bluſtering ignorance battens in the ſun?"

Full well I know theſe boaſted powers of the green-eyed Gnome; but, my favourite Sylphid, your gentle nature, your poliſhed language, and ingenuous truth, pleaſe me

more than all her cunning, energy, and talent for perverſion. Falſehood has no charms for Fame. Even Eurus, my moſt beloved meſſenger of all the winds of Heaven, and whom I moſt employed, is now ſuſpended in my ſervice. He dared to tell me, that the Chief who ſways the ſceptre of the ſainted Louis, a wretched wanderer was through Syria's burning ſands; and hence I laviſhed on one ſingle Knight the ſtore, to which one hundred Captains in the Britiſh fleet could boaſt as fair a title. But from you, my Sylphid, I expect nought but truth, in chaſte and ſimple ornament. Proceed, then, to execute thy miſſion, undiſmayed by envy. I have placed thee in my brilliant car of fancy, given thee judgment to guide the reins with taſte, and thought to whirl it over the ſurface of the earth. On, then, charming Sylphid, and in every corner of the world the clangor of my brazen trumpet ſhall ſalute thee.

FAME.

No.

No. X.

DOES FAME, with the pen of inſpiration, in the language of claſſical refinement, condeſcend to record the labours of the Sylphid? FAME* ! who ſounds her trumpet to the immortality of Genius, Virtue, Valour, and Patriotiſm ! taking from the ſcythe of Time its deſolating power, and raiſing a pillar, dedicated to Truth, which ſhall never periſh—Yes, Mr. Editor, FAME has crowned your Sylphid with a wreath more deſirable than either wealth or power; more gratifying, more enviable, than all the glittering ſplendours of a diadem !

So honoured, ſo diſtinguiſhed, I will purſue my flight. Suſtained by Hope, I will, in defiance of Envy, explore the moſt intricate mazes of this ſublunary world ; traverſe the bland regions of the ſouthern hemiſphere ; brave the wild tumults of the boiſterous north; flit in the eaſtern radiance of the ſun's emerg-

* Vide the laſt paper.

ing

ing orbit; and burniſh my filmy wings in the golden ſplendours of the day-cloſing weſt.

But, alas! human intellect cannot teem with an idea of the perils I encounter in my journey of obſervation. A phalanx of aſſailants hourly purſue me! *Falſehood*, with its brazen front, endeavours to intimidate me. *Jealouſy* expands her broad, green eyes, to faſten, like the baſiliſk, on the ſmalleſt ſpeck for reprehenſion. *Folly* rings her diſcordant bells, to bewilder and annoy me. *Hypocriſy*, with the ſmiling maſk of *Pleaſure*, endeavours to draw me from the paths of *Truth*; and recreant *Revenge* conceals, beneath a cloak of ſplendour, the double-edged keen weapon of deſtruction. Yet do I mock the combination; *Fame* has promiſed to conſecrate my toil; *Fame*, which looks with pity on the baſe, as they float, down the dark tide of oblivion, while *Time* tranſcribes the labours of undaunted *Truth*, upon the page of immortality.

Yet, there are ſcenes where the buſy *Fates* are weaving their web of deſtiny; while a ſolemn *ſilence* ſeems to prognoſticate events of marvellous importance, a power which is indefinable,

definable, forbids even the Sylphid to divulge the ſecrets of this myſtic circle. Unhappy mortals! how different are your ſcenes, your occupations, from thoſe of the etherial regions! We ſport in the ſun's warmeſt luſtre; glide down the vertical and burning beam; approach the zenith of undeſcribable radiance; and, fearleſs, ſhake our tranſparent wings, even in centre of the planetary ſyſtem. We ſkim acroſs the immeaſurable waſte of air, unappalled by the thunder's roar, or the blue ſhaft of the unfettered lightning. We feel no terrors, amidſt the glooms of night; whether we dart like meteors along the milky way, or meaſure the frozen climes where riſes the clear radiance of the brilliant Arctus. We find no enemies among the myriads of our aërial ſpecies; the ſeaſons provide for our every wiſh; we imbibe the auſtral breezes; ſport on the glowing boſom of Favonius, or bathe in the ſoft dews that Heaven ſheds, to nouriſh even the ſmalleſt, meaneſt flowrets! When the ſtrong giant, Boreas, leads on the howling Equinox, we hover round the terreſtrial ſphere. We pay neither flattery nor

gold

gold for the common gifts of nature; neither do we ſhrink beneath the anguiſh of oppreſſion. We feel not the acute pang of beholding miſchievous Gnomes, and pernicious ſprites, contaminating our paths; or, raiſed above the *finer Spirits*, revelling in the plenitude of undiſturbed felicity.

I ſhall cloſe this paper with a brief account of my laſt twelve hours' obſervations. Know, that I loſt my way, either in the miſts of morning, or the condenſe atmoſphere of the metropolis; and, it ſo happened, that I found myſelf on the icicled parapet of an obſcure dwelling in the vicinity of Fleet-ſtreet. A caſement window, with a remnant of a coarſe checked curtain, preſented its ſhattered panes; and, as I had never before viſited an apartment of this deſcription, I did not heſitate to enter.

The inhabitant of this *attic* ſolitude was a poet; perhaps a *Savage*, or a *Chatterton!* a ragged ſurtout, a pair of old ſlippers, ſtockings ungartered, locks uncombed, a beard unſhaved, and a countenance forlorn, with eyes fixed on vacancy, beſpoke the *being*, on whom *nature* had ſet the ſtamp of *mental nobility*;

bility; but whom the vulgar rich, the oſtentatious ignorant, had neglected and deſerted. I examined the recording *Spirit*, *Truth*; and I found that this ſon of Genius poſſeſſed an independent mind! that he had diſdained to flatter the unworthy, or to countenance the vicious; that he had addreſſed inquiries to peculators, written admonitions to profligates, panegyrics on untitled talents, and ſtrictures on political errors: I no longer wondered at the miſeries of his ſituation; but mark the power, the *reſiſtleſs* power of Adverſity!

After many evident emotions, many painful, even agoniſing conflicts, I obſerved this *Man of Mind* unfolding a folio ſheet of foolſcap, and in an audible, though tremulous voice beginning to read a rhapſody of panegyric! Often did he vent the feelings of his ſoul, in deep-drawn ſighs, while he preſſed his hand upon his eyes to conceal the tears which regret and poverty extracted from his full heart! The paper which he held contained a Dedication—to whom? to a pride-pampered, lofty, and *illiterate Patron!* a man, as far *beneath* him, in the ſcale of intellect, as he

he was *above* him on the ſunny altitudes of Fortune!

The manuſcript was diſpatched by a little boy, who, in an hour, returned to ſay that "*the Lord* would be glad to ſee the *Author* that day to dinner." The "Poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling," ſeemed, indeed, to dart "from *Earth* to *Heaven!*" But how to appear at the table of his patron, was now the ſubject of profound cogitation. The *Man* of *Mind* had recourſe to the laſt expedient—his *bed*, his *only reſting place*, was ſpeedily diſpoſed of, and his ruſty "ſuit of *ſolemn* black" was emancipated from the ſhelves of a toleriſed extortioner, to equip him for a viſit to the *Man of Wealth*, and for a new ſeries of mental degradation.

With a look of deep dejection, with a ſigh of that reſignation, which was the only ſubſtitute for deſpair, this vanquiſhed ſpirit deſcended from his eagle's neſt; but, alas! at that moment the rain began to fall in torrents! The *Lord* dined at ſeven o'clock; it was then half paſt ſix; *one* ſolitary *ſhilling* ſtill gleamed in the pocket of the *Son of Genius*; a coach was

was called; and he proceeded, heart-laden, to the abode of his new Patron. I followed.

On knocking at the gate, the Porter, with a voice more appalling than the roar of Cerberus, informed the unexpected visitor that his Lord had, two hours before, "left town, to enjoy the festivities of the season, at his country palace."

I shall make no comment, Mr. Editor; but while my spangle eyes glisten through tears of pity and indignation, I shall only exclaim,

Such is the fate of GENIUS!!!

But *Fame* shall guard the memory of the *Man of Mind*, when the *Man of Wealth* and titles is forgotten;—and the deed shall be recorded on the page of time, by your faithful and invisible

SYLPHID.

No. XI.

MR. EDITOR,

SINCE I laſt addreſſed you, I have endeavoured to diſſipate the melancholy impreſſion made upon my mind by my viſit to the diſappointed Poet; and, as folly is the moſt powerful antidote to reflection, I reſolved, without delay, to explore the intricacies of a faſhionable *converſazione*.

Such an aſſemblage, never before did theſe eyes contemplate. At firſt I thought that I was ſurrounded by Nymphs of the Court of Comus, and Grooms, juſt eſcaped from the occupations of the ſtable. The night was as cold as though we had been condemned to breathe the frozen gales of Siberia; yet, I ſaw naked boſoms, arms, and ſhoulders, as unequivocally diſplayed as though I had been in the haram of an Eaſtern Deſpot.

The apartments were as *unſeaſonably* decorated as the *beauties* who adorned them. Feſtoons

toons of roſes ſeemed to wither in the fumes of ſulphur, iſſuing from a confined and health-deſtroying ſtove; while numberleſs waxen tapers ſhed an artificial light on a ceiling of *blue ſky*, from which a brilliant luſtre was, like the tomb of Mahomet, ſuſpended!

I ſoon diſcovered, that the ſubject of general converſation was Peace! and various were the ſenſations of various minds on this moſt intereſting epocha. Lady Vermeil, while ſhe contemplated her features in a magnificent mirror, declared, that ſhe was heartily weary of the war—*becauſe*, ſhe found "the price of French *looking-glaſſes* enormouſly augmented!" The lovely Ducheſs of Helicon, with all her native ſenſibility, ſighed her regrets that "ſo many brave fellows had periſhed!" I caught a tear that fell from her eye, as ſhe ſpoke, and, placing it on my brow, conſidered it as a gem that might have embelliſhed a diadem!—It was the tear of pity, ſpontaneouſly ſpringing from an heart that vice and folly never could contaminate.

I bluſhed when I beheld her in a circle ſo unworthy of her ſanction and her ſociety.

Mrs.

Mrs. Evergreen now darted forward, and with rapture vowed, that ſhe would expend a whole year's pin-money *in French perfumes* the moment that Peace ſhould be concluded.—"Ridiculous!" interrupted Lady Lombard—"who ever expects fragrance from an *Evergreen?*" Lord Languiſh, ſtarting from a reverie, thanked Heaven! that he ſhould, when hoſtilities ſubſided, have the power to "eſcape from the *Goths and Vandals*, who had preſumed to ſcoff at his *eccentricities*." While an high-varniſhed Marchioneſs, with an oath that would have been appropriate in the mouth of a dragoon, declared, that ſhe ſhould ſoon ride a match on the *Plains de Sablon*, that would aſtoniſh even the ſoul of Bonaparte!

A venerable *Spinſter*, with rigid features, and phraſe ſententious, expreſſed her terrors at the idea of "a communication with ſuch a band of deſperadoes! I have heard," ſaid ſhe, "of their outrages towards the tender ſex! I have been told, that neither *youth* nor *beauty* can eſcape the ruffian graſp of lawleſs ſenſuality! Thus *have I not* cauſe to fear?

where,

where, where is *Innocence* to fly for ſafety?" A loud laugh ſilenced this timid veſtal; and a lively *belle*, of eighteen, proclaimed her turn to ſpeak.

With a ſmile which diſplayed the dimples of *Venus!* with a bluſh that would have embelliſhed the cheek of *Hebe*, ſhe avowed *herſelf* devoid of *every apprehenſion;* and declared, that though England boaſted of many *good-natured Huſbands*, a *romantic Lover* was only to be found in France! This declaration acted like an electric ſhock upon the nerves of a venerable Nobleman; but as "*depreſſus extollor*" is always the maxim of exalted minds, he ſoon recovered his fortitude; and humming an Opera air, replaced the patch upon his upper lip, with the grace of an *Adonis*.

I now looked round, with an inquiſitive eye, in hopes that I ſhould diſcover, among the exalted group, ſome of thoſe enlightened females for which this country is ſo juſtly celebrated: but alas! not one was to be ſeen! No INCHBALD delighted with the unaffected graces of converſation; no COWLEY charmed with the lively ſallies of that wit, which has

ſo

ſo often embelliſhed the dramatic ſcene: no ſweetly plaintive SMITH, no tuneful SEWARD there diffuſed the harmony of magic numbers! No SIDDONS awed with dignity of manners originating in dignity of ſoul! No JORDAN animated with the faſcinating unſophiſticated ſmiles of all attractive nature!—the buſineſs of the ſcene, I there contemplated, was divided into three claſſes—gaming, ſcandal, and intrigue! while the vapid nonſenſe of uſeleſs converſation (leſs pernicious in its effects than either of the preceding vices) precluded women of ſuperior intellectual powers from any attention in this motly rendezvous of ignorance and folly.

I notwithſtanding obſerved a Man of Genius promiſe tranſlations of French Plays for the Engliſh Stage, when a peace ſhould be concluded. Give us *tranſlations*, re-echoed on every ſide. The word awoke an unwieldy *Churchman*, who, ſtarting from his downy ſofa, emphatically exclaimed, "*No Popery!*" while a blooming girl of fifteen profeſſed her "*idolatry* of French enthuſiaſm;" and fervently hoped "to learn, from *Buonaparte*, the cuſtoms,

toms, and the devotion of—a *Türkiſh Seraglio!*"

As the clock ſtruck *two*, the motley groupe deſcended to the ſupper-room; and I retired, Mr. Editor, to give you this haſty report, of your *wondering*

SYLPHID.

No. XII.

YOU will be ſurpriſed, Mr. Editor, when I tell you that, in this overgrown metropolis, your indefatigable *Sylphid* ſhould have been at a loſs for a diverſity of information. But the truth originates in the unvaried rounds of diſſipated purſuits, which pervade the abodes of all ranks of people, from the drawing-room of *His Grace*, to the ſmoaking-room of honeſt *John Bull*. *Life*, or what the exiſting race denominate *the way to live*, whether *ſans ſouci* or *ſans ſix ſous*, is now the whole end and aim of buſy mortals! But, a truce to moraliſing.

On

On the *Eighteenth of January* I employed all my active faculties, to make amends for the loſs of time during the laſt fortnight. O! ſuch a buſy day! ſuch ſcenes! ſuch dreſſing, driving, ſimpering, and ſmiling, never before did *Sylphid* eyes behold. And, I aſſure you, Mr. Editor, that the *male coquets* of the day were as zealous for conqueſt, as indefatigable in the labours of the *toilette*, as the moſt lovely and diſtinguiſhed of our courtly beauties.

Full on the wing in purſuit of novelty, I entered the dreſſing-room window of a *Right Honourable Petit Maitre!* The ſaſh was left half open to give freſhneſs to his complexion, while he cautiouſly tinged the paleneſs of his features with the *Egyptian bronze*, now ſo univerſally in faſhion. This celebrated fluid gives a manly grace to the languid and colourleſs inſipidity which *modern life* beſtows on the countenance of modern revellers; who waſte their days on beds of down, and conſume their nights in the vortex of a gaming-table.

I obſerved my hero of the morning, during the lapſe of four hours, as completely metamorphoſed

morphoſed as though he had paſſed the renovating fumes of *Medea's Kettle*; or, to uſe a more familiar ſimile, he became, from the moſt inanimate and ſhapeleſs grub, a *butterfly* of the very firſt ſplendour, His form which was by nature lank and emaciated, aſſumed an *Herculean* appearance; his pale forehead and heavy eyes, were, by a kind of magical proceſs, ſo re-animated, that they would have been characteriſtic of "*the front of Jove himſelf!*" Then, Mr. Editor, ſuch powerful odours, ſuch a mixture of Arabian dews, ſuch Perſian eſſences, ſuch aromatic gales, ſcented the apartment, that I, who had been accuſtomed to the broad etherial atmoſphere, was almoſt ſuffocated by their ſweetneſs.

At three o'clock the chariot, which was to convey the courtly *Narciſſus* to the ſcene of triumph, arrived at the door. It was hung low on the ſprings, that every ſtreet-gazer might have an opportunity of contemplating its noble owner. Arrived at St. James's (my little wings never reſting while I continued to purſue him), I obſerved him enter the drawing-room. I there beheld a blaze of beauty!

But, judge of my aſtoniſhment, when I obſerved the *Male Coquet* as little ſtruck by the attractions around him, as though he had been an automaton. Self! Bewitching Self! was the excluſive object of his idolatry; and I liſtened to that voice which had, not an hour before, thundered anathemas againſt a trembling *valet de chambre*, now liſping with all the ſoft and dulcet effeminacy of refined converſation.

From the drawing-room he haſtened home, and in a few minutes completely underwent a *new* metamorphoſis. His horſes were waiting, and I now beheld him with a brown cropped wig, a ſtriped flannel waiſtcoat, and all thoſe equeſtrian decorations that might have diſputed a rivalry with the loweſt groom in his ſtable. His courtly bow was exchanged for a nod of vulgar familiarity; his *chapeau bras*, for the ſquare-elbowed attitude of a profeſſed pugiliſt; his thrice-powdered, thrice-eſſenced head, for a broad crowned hat, which would have become the brows of a beef-eater; and his red-heeled pumps for a pair of ſquare-toed boots, which were well ſuited to the occupation

tion of a French poſtillion! He now talked in a jargon which ſeemed peculiarly adapted to his appearance. He declared that Lady Harriet was the "neat thing;" that he was "up to the rig of old Dowager Dwindlecourt; that he found a drawing-room a *bore*, the women all *quizzes*; and the next time he was *humbugged* into ſuch an act of *dupery*, he hoped he ſhould be voted a *flat* in every ſociety of the *bon ton!*"

After taking one turn in Hyde-park, he haſtened to Bond-ſtreet, where he lounged till twilight; from the coffee-houſe, after a ſhort dinner, he repaired to the theatre; there he diſturbed the audience, by rattling from box to box, till chance conducted him to one which was occupied by a ſober citizen and his two fair daughters. The right honourable rambler amuſed himſelf by making ludicrous grimaces, as he ſat behind the father, while, with his feet on the bench, he annoyed the females of the family. Unfortunately an obſerver commented ſomewhat ſharply on the ill-manners of our young nobility: and the comment being keenly retorted, the ſcene was rapidly

rapidly changed from pantomine to tragedy; the hero of the day being ſhortly after conveyed to his home, ſmarting under the effects of that chaſtiſement which his folly had ſo juſtly merited!—I remain your truſty

SYLPHID.

No. XIII.

OF all the eccentric characters that have met my obſervation, there is none which has ſo completely diſguſted me as the WOU'D-BE MAN OF FASHION. Theſe ſelf-created beings are met with at all places of public entertainment—in the *promenades*, and in the ſtreets, at the weſt end of the metropolis. They are eaſily recognized, both by the outer form of their dreſs, and the undaunted effrontery of their features. Not ſatisfied with a faſhionable appearance, they affect a ſingularity, which at once characterizes both ignorance and vulgarity.

Being

Being a few evenings ſince at Vauxhall, I took my ſtation near one of the trees which faces the orcheſtra. Beneath me, alone, and in a penſive attitude, ſat a perſon who had the appearance of a country gentleman. A broad-brimmed low-crowned hat, a brown ſurtout, and an old-faſhioned gold-headed cane, reminded me of the moſt finiſhed of dramatic characters—as drawn by Cumberland, and acted by Kemble—the admirable *Penruddock!* Oppoſite to this unoffending ruſtic philoſopher ſat four *bucks* of third rate ſociety. They obſerved the man of thought, and without attending to the common rules of propriety, commenced their attack with all the artillery of grimace—inuendo, nodding, winking, hemming, coughing, and whiſtling; ſymptoms which, in the jargon of modern refinement, conſtitute the polite art of *quizzing*.

Mr. Ruſticus, for ſo I ſhall denominate the hero of my adventure, endured the inſolence of folly for a long time with exemplary fortitude, till one of the attacking phalanx, with a bow of affected ſolemnity, enquired after his health, and that of his ſon and daughter, 'Squire Richard

Richard and Miſs Jenny! The ſtranger made no reply, but waving his cane with a frown, as a ſignal for the coxcomb to depart, again turned his eyes towards the paſſing circle.

Unſucceſsful in his firſt attack, young FUSTIAN tried a ſecond. "We are going to take a ſlight ſupper with ſome burnt hock," ſaid he, "and as we are confoundedly hipped with the dullneſs of the company, we ſhall thank you to be of our party. You are moſt likely a lively fellow, indeed your pleaſant looks beſpeak you ſuch, and we will take no refuſal. Our ſupper is ordered at a guinea a head, with champagne and claret. You ſhall not, you muſt not refuſe to make one." The ſtranger roſe to mingle with the crowd: the four aſſailants followed.

"Can you, Sir," continued the perſecuting Fuſtian, "can you refuſe an only ſon, juſt returned from ſerving his country! Can you forbear to own me?"

"Puppy, I never ſaw you before this night," replied Mr. Ruſticus.

"Unnatural parent!" continued young Fuſtian, "Look in my face, behold the features of

of my mother, ſeduced, and left by you to periſh !"

Theſe words, being uttered in a tone ſomewhat louder than a whiſper, attracted the ear of a paſſing ſpectator, who, with inquiſitive attention, joined the group.

" Remember the beautiful Eleonora !" ſaid young Fuſtian ; " the mother of your unhappy ſon."

" D—n Eleonora !" exclaimed the irritated Ruſticus.

" You are an unfeeling old ſavage !" cried the attending ſpectators. Ruſticus ſhook his cane, menacing his commentator, and the group augmented to an extenſive circle.

The courage of FUSTIAN now began to fail, and he ſtole from the throng with a ſigh, lamenting that he " could not chaſtiſe a parent."

" Poor young man !" exclaimed a venerable citizen. " Sweet fellow !" cried a pretty milliner. Unhappy wretch !" ſighed a female philanthropiſt, while the honeſt and indignant Ruſticus vociferated—" Impudent ſcoundrel !"

Before theſe words had been tranſcribed on

on the page of Diſcord, by the GNOME, attendant at all ſuch ſcenes, Fuſtian returned, and leading, "nothing loath," a lady of gallant notoriety, once more conjured the aſtoniſhed Ruſticus to receive the lovely and deſerted Elinor. The woman, tutored to her taſk, now hung around him, entreated him to own her and her ſon; while the miſchievous group whiſpered her a rich reward, and the exaſperated multitude hooted their indignation.

At this momentous criſis an old half-pay officer, who had obſerved the progreſs of the plot, and who was no ſtranger to the *quizzing* ſyſtem, or its conſequences, ſtepped forward as the ſecond of the perſecuted Ruſticus, and in a few moments the lady was conſigned to the protection of a peace officer, and the now paſſive leader of the affray ſeverely chaſtiſed for his impertinence: while the tide of popular vengeance turned againſt the cowardly impoſtor, and the half-pay officer requeſted permiſſion to accompany honeſt Ruſticus, with empty pockets, to his lodgings in the City: thither I attended them.

On

On the following morning I renewed my viſit, and inviſibly entering the apartment, I found Mr. Ruſticus buſily employed with an eminent ſolicitor. Directing my eyes over the parchment, which was lying before me, I found that it was a will, bequeathing an eſtate of five thouſand pounds per annum to the truly gallant half-pay ſon of Mars; thereby diſinheriting a nephew, who had been from his infancy a ſtranger to Ruſticus, but whom he had identified on the preceding night in the perſon of young Fuſtian.

If this brief adventure ſhould prove uſeful to the riſing generation, and evince the danger which may be incurred by the art of *quizzing*, the public will not regret that it occupied the attention of your faithful

SYLPHID.

No. XIV.

HEAVENS! what ſtrange ſcenes of refined *deception* am I doomed to contemplate, in my journey of indefatigable obſervation! —How few beings do I encounter who are really what they *ſeem*; who do not varniſh over their actions with the gloſs of ſuperficial hypocriſy, or impoſe upon the ingenuouſneſs of Nature, by the moſt invincible effrontery!

I was led to theſe reflections by the following circumſtance:—Being almoſt petrified by the intenſe cold, a few evenings ſince, I availed myſelf of an opportunity that offered, and *inviſibly* entered the tea-room of one of thoſe females generally diſtinguiſhed for their obtruſive prominence in every ſociety: I found her ſeated amidſt a ſmall circle of ſecond-rate perſonages in a comfortable apartment; and, by the moſt impoſing manners, commanding the attention of her companions. Few ſentences had eſcaped her lips, before I diſcover-

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ed that my new ſubject of obſervation was one of thoſe overbearing and decided cenſors, who examine without judgment, and condemn without remorſe, merely for the pleaſure of maintaining a ſingularity of opinion. She talked loudly, and inceſſantly, on various topics; but the *immorality* of the *times*, and the *follies* of her *own ſex*, were evidently the moſt favourite themes of her acrimonious animadverſions.

Filled with the ſuſtaining *gaz* of ſelf-importance, *Mrs Prominent*, for ſo I denominate her, expatiated on vice with the ingenuity of one who had long been initiated in all its varying myſteries. She uttered anathemas againſt thoſe who had wandered from the paths of *virtue;* and, with a kind of ludicrous ſolemnity, thanked Heaven that *her* "name was *irreproachable*!"

The *ſecond* ſubject of comment was that of modern female purſuits. She condemned the *art* which women employed in the embelliſhment of their perſons, while the French *rouge* on her cheek was deepened by the glow of conſcious ſhame; and the humidity of compunction

compunction gliſtened through the falſe ringlets which ſhaded a forehead overſpread with the deadly whiteneſs of pearl-powder. She complained of the licentious latitude of female dreſs, while ſhe indecently diſplayed a boſom that would have diſguſted a Hottentot; and extolled *neatneſs* as the moſt admired of perfections, while ſhe exhibited a perſon rendered diſguſting by *dirt* and *frippery*, that would have diſgraced a Pariſian inhabitant of the *Rue Saint Honoré!*

Her *third* chapter of declamation turned upon the *literature* of the day. Here *Mrs. Prominent* aſſumed a more than ordinary importance! She arrogantly ventured to examine, diſtort, diſſect, and condemn, even the moſt poliſhed compoſitions. She raved in the moſt *ungrammatical jargon* of provincial dialect, againſt the *language* of modern writers; *cenſured* with unbluſhing effrontery the preſumption of incompetent *critics*; with an acrimonious affectation of wit, *ridiculed* the malevolence of *ſatiriſts*; and, while ſhe perpetually quoted paſſages from a flimſy work, which ſhe had *made up* of fragments, *collected* at all the book-ſtalls

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in the metropolis, declared, that there was not *one* female writer of the preſent æra who had talents to compoſe a book completely *original.*

Her *fourth* courſe of calumny was a ſalmagundi of no leſs ſickening materials, than thoſe of the three preceding. She ridiculed the *obſcure birth*, and early occupations, of certain enlightened individuals; this man was "low born;" that woman "of vulgar extraction:" and, while every fourth word ſhe uttered was marked by either a *falſe application*, or a *falſe pronunciation*, ſhe "*boldly affirmed*," to uſe her favourite expreſſion, that no woman, who was not *claſſically* educated, had a right to obtrude her opinions on the public!

Her *fifth* rhapſody of reprehenſion was dedicated to what *ſhe* denominated "*the minor follies.*" She execrated the *vanity* of women, and declared, that *ſhe* had never felt its influence, though ſhe had often been *miſtaken* for ſome of the *moſt celebrated beauties!* She blamed the inſignificance of *affectation*, while ſhe lamented that *ſhe* was a martyr to the *delicacy*

licacy of *her feelings*; extolled *good-nature*, while ſhe lamented that women were, in general, ſo *depraved* as to be unfit for ſociety; abhorred the houſe-hold *Zantippe*, though ſhe menaced her trembling ſervant with the moſt vehement reſentment; and praiſed the meekneſs of *connubial obedience*, while ſhe glanced at her aſtoniſhed *caro ſpoſo*, with the virulence of a *virago!*

This tranſient viſit induced me to explore the page of Mrs. *Prominent's* hiſtory: and a ſiſter *Sylph* has informed me, that ſhe was a woman of low extraction; ſuperficially educated; and unexpectedly raiſed from a ſtate of ſervile dependance to the enjoyments of proſperity; that ſhe had been, in her youth, a living example of that frailty which ſhe ſo unbluſhingly condemned; but having out-lived the memory of a wounded reputation, ſhe had wholly forgotten the ſting which had inflicted it. I alſo learnt that ſhe was the avowed flatterer of high-flown indiſcretion; the intimate aſſociate of *ſnug*, but *opulent* depravity; that ſhe could wink at ſcenes which violated *domeſtic propriety;* that ſhe feaſted at the plenteous

teous tables of ſpecious, *deceptive* characters, though ſhe reviled the ſinking daughters of poverty, whom *credulity* has ſubjugated to the artifices of ſeduction; or *neceſſity* propelled to the miſery of perſonal degradation.

In ſhort, Mr. Editor, I find that ſuch characters are to be met with in almoſt every quarter of the metropolis; that they are every thing, but *what they appear to be*, and only *really known* to your indigent

SYLPHID.

By way of poſtſcript, Mr. Editor, I beg leave to offer theſe ſhort admonitory Stanzas to every Mrs. PROMINENT of the preſent day.

ERE ye condemn, let CONSCIENCE be your guide,
Think not *Deception* will the wiſe beguile;
'Tis eaſy, ſinking VIRTUE to deride,
But *Innocence* delights not in the toil.

By

By over-acted zeal in checking ſin,
You act the BEAR, who wou'd the *bee-hive* ſtorm;
Who, rouſing all the buſy tribes within,
Was *ſtung to torture* by the angry ſwarm.

Examine well your lives, and if no ſtain
Your *reputation* ſully, take the field;
The plea of MORALS ſhall the fight maintain,
And ſpotleſs VIRTUE be the victor's ſhield.

But if, perchance, ſtern-TRUTH ſhou'd whiſper low,
Remember paſt events, or preſent guile;
Indignant REASON ſhall a ſcourge beſtow,
And *broad-eyed* WONDER mock ye with a *ſmile*.

JASPER.

A

FRAGMENT.

[This Novel, though unfiniſhed, will not fail to recommend itself to the Reader, whose principal feeling will probably be the regret that it terminates ſo abruptly.]

JASPER.

CHAPTER I.

LOUD blew the wind, and the contending waves augmented the howling of the ſtorm, when Jaſper ruſhed towards the forecaſtle with the infant Edmund. It was midnight. The white foam daſhed over the lofty prow of the veſſel, and the lightning every moment illumined the wide ocean. Horror and diſmay were pictured in the countenances of the devoted crew; and the ſmall boat which was lifted and engulphed alternately, as the tempeſt ſwayed the ſurge, preſented the only chance of reſcue from deſtruction.

Jaſper had ſeen many years of ſervice: he had felt the ſalt wave waſh his white hairs in the ſtormy hour of night, while the leſs nobly organized, repoſed upon beds of down: He had been driven by the fierce hurricane on the

bleak ſands or on the rocky eminence, while undiſturbed ſlumber had cloſed the eyes of indolence and folly.

On the forecaſtle he meditated;—the infant Edmund crept into his boſom. The cold rain, the bleak and cutting wind ſcattered the golden hair that played about a cheek roſy and beautiful. The lightning ſhivered the main-maſt, the ſhip rolled as it fell into the deep yawning abyſs. The thunder, in frequent and terrifying peals, ſeemed to ſhake the heavens. Jaſper looked fearfully towards the flaſhing clouds—he preſſed the infant cloſe to his breaſt. The boat was ready; one place yet remained; it was reſerved as the laſt ſcene of hope for the preſerver of poor Edmund.

At no great diſtance from the wreck, the few who had eſcaped beheld her diſappear for ever. The boat, after many hours of peril and fatigue to her almoſt exhauſted paſſengers, reached the ſhore. On the bare ſtrand they looked around them: before their eyes the wide ocean preſented, as the morning ſun glittered on its waves, a ſolitary waſte of waters, ſcattered here and there with fragments of the wreck;

wreck ; above their heads a black and ſtupendous rock ſeemed to frown on the wretched throng ; while Famine threw a ghaſtly hue over their features, and Miſery in all her worſt ſhapes on every ſide aſſailed them.

Near the ſummit of the cliff a little hovel preſented itſelf. The roof was a projecting part of the eminence ; and the door was cloſed, as if the abode of neceſſity had been deſerted by him who had raiſed it.

The number who had eſcaped from the Indiaman amounted to eleven. And, of ſix female paſſengers, not one had been reſcued from the fury of the elements. Among thoſe that periſhed was Madame de Stanheim, the mother of young Edmund.

The hovel, which firſt met the eyes of Jaſper, excited emotions which quickened the circulation of every heart. Hope preſented all her viſions of delight, and the certainty that any thing human had exiſted on the lonely ſpot, which ſeemed to them the univerſe for a moment, cheared their hearts, and gave them new ſtrength to encounter the miſeries of their deſtiny.

Jaſper

Jaſper was the firſt to climb the rugged ſteep. He was the foremoſt that attained the entrance of the hovel. The door was cloſed. The high weeds had grown before the threſhold—no human footſtep had preſſed them for many a day. The roof was covered with moſs. The little path up the ſteep acclivity was unmarked by the track of any paſſenger. Jaſper paufed and liſtened. He called repeatedly, but no one anſwered. A ſecret horror chilled his heart; he retreated a few paces, hailed his companions, grew pale, and trembled.

"This muſt have been the hovel of a hu-
"man creature," ſaid he. "Theſe ſtones
"were placed here by man; theſe weeds ſtill
"ſhew, among their wildneſs, ſome little herbs
"which look as though there had been culti-
"vation. Here," continued Jaſper, "here
"alſo is a myrtle tree; here the variegated
"holly"—Again he called more loudly—all within the hovel was ſilent as the grave; all without was tranquil; the wind gently ſwept the ocean, and the ſun ſeemed to glow in triumph over the ravages of the tempeſt.

"Let

" Let us force the door," ſaid one ; " per-
" haps we ſhall find ſomething that will re-
" ward us for our pains."

" Let us force the door," repeated the impatient throng. Jaſper ſet down the baby Edmund on the long weeds, and in a few moments the entrance of the ſolitary abode was unfolded.

CHAPTER II.

THE beams of light which entered the narrow door ſhewed every part of the hovel diſtinctly : a rude table of ſtone, and a pallet of dried weeds, compoſed the whole of the furniture. On the former lay, open, a book of prayer. On the latter a ſmall packet of papers, twiſted round with a lock of braided hair. The uppermoſt contained theſe words : " Shipwrecked on the 1ſt September, 1766." The letters were addreſſed to " HENRY :" they were ſigned " CECILE."

The

The ſailors continued to ſearch the hovel, regardleſs of what they thought uſeleſs and unintereſting. Jaſper had ſecured the papers, and the book of prayer; when one of his comrades ſhouted, "A prize! a prize!" as he held above his head a watch, and a purſe containing ſeveral pieces of gold, the coin of Indoſtan.

Jaſper could read as well as he could feel. He had been born to independence; but in his youth his parents had croſſed the affections of his heart; he had been ſent to ſea, and during his abſence the woman he had ſelected had married a more wealthy lover. Jaſper's ſoul was proud as it was ſuſceptible: he did not reproach the being who had debaſed herſelf for gold: he pitied, he forgave, but he vowed never to ſee her more.

Not only his inconſtant miſtreſs was by oath an alien to his breaſt; he alſo determined never again to own his kindred, his unkind kindred. To the wild waves he flew for conſolation; they afforded him a home, troubled and changing as that which he had deſerted; but he was become careleſs of his deſtiny, he had

had nothing to hope; and fear was a ſtranger to his nature.

As he quitted the hovel leading little Edmund, now ſix years old, his eyes turned towards heaven in gratitude for their mutual preſervation, he beheld in a nook a few paces higher than the roof of the cell, a crucifix. He alſo obſerved a beaten path which led to it. His feet ſwiftly meaſured the ſmall diſtance, and as ſwiftly recoiled with horror! Near the croſs lay a human ſkeleton perfect, excepting the right arm of which the upper joint only was remaining.

Jaſper's cheek was chilled: his heart throbbed quickly. "God of mercies!" exclaimed he, "what do I behold?—The poor remains "of ſome wretched ſea-beaten mariner, ſome "ſolitary outcaſt from the world, ſome exile "from the haunts of man, who has periſhed "here, unknown, unburied!" He turned from the object of his meditations, and preſently after joined his companions.

Joy was viſible in every countenance. They had found more treaſure; a fiſhing-net and a fowling-piece. The day was clear, the wind

had

had fallen, and the ſea ſcarcely heaved above her ſurface: the boat was little damaged by the ſtorm, and the horrors of their ſituation abated conſiderably.

Night approached and they ſheltered themſelves from its cold, as from its perils, in the rocky hovel. At dawn light Jaſper roſe from a deep ſleep, and repaired again to the nook where he had the preceding evening beheld the ſubject of his dreams. With eager ſpeed he covered the bones with moſs and pebbles at the foot of the crucifix; and fencing the entrance with large pieces of rock which lay ſcattered near it, he knelt before the rude mauſoleum, where he uttered a fervent prayer for the repoſe of the departed ſpirit.

Having performed this pious taſk, Jaſper ſeated himſelf on the rock, and taking from his boſom the packet which he had found, began to unfold the letters. The firſt was addreſſed to Henry, and contained theſe words:

" Too certain is my deſtiny!—To-morrow,
" Oh! to-morrow my fate will be decided.
" To your unfeeling brother I muſt reſign my-
" ſelf. My *father's oath* is irrevocable.

" Oh,

" Oh, Henry! when the wide ſea ſhall ſe-
" parate us; when the ſhores of Britain ſhall
" meet your eyes, where—where ſhall Cecile
" hope for conſolation? Can the treaſures of
" this eaſtern world compenſate for the loſs
" of thee? Can the pomp and ſtate of often-
" tatious folly alleviate the pang, the acute
" pang of ſeparation? Happy ſhould I feel
" were I preparing to be the partner of your
" deſtiny, whether thy paſſage be acroſs the
" ſmooth and pleaſant ocean, wafted by pro-
" pitious gales to peace and to your native
" home, or to the gulph which leads to eter-
" nity beneath the wild and ungovernable
" billows.

" To-morrow! Henry—to-morrow the leſ-
" ſening ſail will mark thy progreſs from this
" Indian world! To-morrow will give this
" being, this trembling feveriſh being, to the
" object of its hatred.

" The braid of hair which I incloſe my
" hands have woven: it is bathed in my tears:
" it has been made ſacred by the ſighs of un-
" polluted love.

" Eighteen years only have paſſed ſince I firſt

" breathed

" breathed in this diſaſtrous world, and yet I " am weary of exiſtence: I look forward to " the grave as my only aſylum from ſorrow.

" The ſilence of the ſolitary tomb
" Alone can ſoothe to peace this beating breaſt;
" Pale Death ſhall be my harbinger of reſt,
" My ſcene of ſweet repoſe, eternal gloom!
" For on the mountain's brow the ſun no more
" Shall greet theſe eyes with joy at morn's return;
" The dewy night ſhall waft its fragrant ſtore
" On happier boſoms, while I ſilent mourn.
" The pale moon's melancholy beams ſhall ſhine
" With envy on this paler cheek of mine;
" The dew drop, to the thirſty flower leſs dear
" Than to thy mem'ry, love!—Affection's tear
" Shall bathe my fever'd lip, till death's repoſe
" Shall bid thoſe eyes in ſleep eternal cloſe.

" CECILE."

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

JASPER read the letter twice, and the concluſive lines: he felt the ſorrows they delineated; he felt them impreſſed upon his heart by the ſtrong power of ſympathy. His comrades now ſhouted from the ſands: they had diſcovered a freſh ſpring, and were bearing on their ſhoulders ſeveral caſks of proviſion which the night breakers had waſhed on ſhore. Jaſper deſcended, for little Edmund was faint for want of food. A fire was kindled by means of the flint which they found in the fowling-piece, and the dry leaves of autumn blazed chearfully while they cooked their morning meal.

Jaſper's mind was occupied in meditation: he frequently turned his eyes towards the lonely nook; while his fancy brought to view the tenant of the rock, whoſe days had been waſted in ſolitude, and whoſe death had been unbleſſed by a tear of holy ſorrow.

At ſun-ſet the ſailors obſerved at a diſtance

on

on the ſands, an object which had been left there by the waves. It was at four hundred paces diſtant from them on the margin of the ocean, and at the foot of a craggy ſteep which continued the chain of rocks along the ſhore. They haſtened to examine their new prize. Jaſper had little inclination to ſeek after treaſure; he therefore remained with Edmund on the beach, and as ſoon as his comrades were out of hearing, unfolded the ſecond letter: it was dated at a more remote period than the firſt which he had read, and was compoſed of the following lines:

" The evening ſun now ſmiles ſerene,
" Fluſh'd ocean's glowing waves between;
" The purpling ſky is fading faſt,
" With tints of varying hue o'ercaſt;
" The ſultry breezes fan the deep,
" And bid the reſtleſs billows ſleep;
" The glooms of night will ſoon o'erſpread
" The blue hills' ſolitary head,
" And all of Nature's tribe ſhall ſleep,
" While Love alone ſhall wake to weep.

" O'er yonder ſhad'wy rocky bed
" The ſea-weed waves its ſable head:
" The moon her ſilver creſcent rears,
" To deck, with modeſt light, the ſpheres;

" The

" The moaning of the diſtant deep
" Marks where the twilight breezes ſweep,
" And hark! the ſea-birds diſmal cry
" Awakes the lover's breaſt—to ſigh !—

" Now all is ſolemn, dark, and drear,
" No ſtar illumes the ſullen ſphere;
" The moon, in ſhrouded gloom is loſt,
" Cold blows the wind, the waves are toſt;
" And loud the foaming deep is heard,
" While ſhrilly ſhrieks the cavern bird;
" And where the rocks of ruin riſe,
" A wreck, a gallant veſſel lies."

As Jaſper ſighed over the concluding ſtanza, he obſerved his comrades bearing their new-found treaſure towards him. It was the corpſe of Madame de Stanheim. Every countenance beſpoke the feelings of every heart: tears were viſible on every cheek; but not a ſyllable was uttered. The red beams of the ſetting ſun threw a glowing reflection on the white drapery that enveloped the body, which, when life lent it animation, was the loveliеſt work of Nature.

The remains of Madame de Stanheim were conveyed to the rock hovel; they were laid on the pallet of leaves: Jaſper knelt beſide them,

them, and opening his prayer-book read a ſhort petition to the Supreme Diſpoſer of all things, for the repoſe of that ſoul which had quitted its mortal manſion of periſhable beauty. Some of his comrades ſtood with ſilent reſpect near the corpſe; others guarded the threſhold; while little Edmund gathered wild flowers and weeds, as if he meant to decorate the grave of his loſt mother.

The ſolemn prayer being ended, Jaſper, in a low and tremulous voice, propoſed burying the corpſe in the nook above the hovel: "I "will undertake the taſk," ſaid he. As he ſpoke Edmund ran towards him; his arms encircled a large bundle of weeds and wild flowers. He threw them at Jaſper's feet; and in a few moments, ſprinkled with tears, they were ſcattered over the boſom of Madame de Stanheim.

As the laſt gleam of twilight ſtole over the ocean, Jaſper depoſited the corpſe in the nook beſide the bones of him who had periſhed in the rocky ſolitude. Edmund gathered the pebbles round the ſpot, and placed them in regular order near the entrance, which was again

again cloſed by large blocks of ſtone which Jaſper had before rolled from the ſurrounding acclivity.

Previous to the entombing of the corpſe, one of the ſailors obſerved a ring on the third finger of the left hand: it was an onyx of remarkable form. This gem had not eſcaped the eyes of Jaſper; but the idea of plundering an inanimate being was too horrible for a mind ſo ſenſitively organized. There were many in the group who, had opportunity permitted, would have been leſs ſcrupulous; and there was one who had determined to poſſeſs the treaſure.

At midnight he ſtole from the hovel while all his comrades were aſleep. The moon ſhone on the wide ocean; the light breezes moaned among the rocks; the ſtupendous cliff ſeemed to meet the ſky, and the curlew ſcreamed as the ſacrilegious plunderer crept up the rugged pathway. Nature ſeemed to pauſe in horror while he entered the laſt ſanctuary of departed virtue. Not a breath of wind whiſpered to aid the concealment of the crime from the liſtening ear of Jaſper. He heard the fragments of ſtone rolled from the

nook; he ſtarted from his pillow of leaves; he flew with light footſteps up the rough ſteep: —the robber attempted to conceal himſelf by climbing the rock; he fell from a projecting point, and ſunk in the ocean that rolled beneath.

In the morning when the ſailors met upon the beach, one of their number was miſſing. Jaſper had been obſerved quitting the hovel at midnight: all eyes were turned upon him, he became pale. "Where is our comrade?" cried ſeveral voices.

"Buried in the deep ſea," anſwered Jaſper.

"By whom?" vociferated the throng.

"By an avenging God!" replied Jaſper.

The awful tone of voice in which he ſpoke occaſioned a pauſe of ſome moments—when Jaſper again addreſſed his comrades: "He "was a robber; he would have plundered the "dead; our lives were not ſafe in the power "of ſuch a villain; he would have murdered "us when ſleeping, had we poſſeſſed any trea- "ſure that could have tempted him."

"But he ſhould have had a trial," cried one. "He ſhould have been allowed to make his "defence."

"He

" He was tried," ſaid Jaſper.

" By whom ?"

" By an omnipotent Judge !---He was found " guilty, and his puniſhment was awful as it " was ſevere."

" What proof have you of his guilt ?" was the next queſtion.

" I found the monument laid open, and at " the threſhold this ring, which had been " taken from the dead hand of Madame de " Stanheim."—Every heart ſeemed to ſhudder ; every cheek turned pale. The group drew nearer to Jaſper ; they looked firſt at the ring, then at each other.

" For me !" cried little Edmund, raiſing his arms to reach it.

" Yes ! for *thee*, boy !" replied Jaſper, " It " was thy mother's ; the only legacy ſhe could " leave thee ; and it ſhall be thine."

" It ſhall be Edmund's," cried another in the throng.—" It ſhall be Edmund's !" vociferated the whole group at the ſame moment.

Reader, this ring was ordained by the Ruler of a myſterious deſtiny to be the taliſman of Edmund's fate. It was not in the power of

Fraud

Fraud to wreſt it from him. It was preſerved as a token, that amidſt all the viciſſitudes of fortune Heaven would not forſake him. It was preſented by Virtue, in her rudeſt form, from the hand of a dead mother. It had been a pledge of love. It was to be the unraveller of Edmund's fate, of Madame de Stanheim's ſorrows.

On the fifth day after the ſhipwreck, at dawn light Jaſper diſcovered a boat approaching the ſhore. The joyful tidings were inſtantly communicated to his ſleeping comrades, and they all haſtened to the beach, where by ſignals they ſoon made themſelves viſible. It contained ſeveral men and two officers, belonging to a veſſel returning to Britain from a voyage of diſcovery, and anchored at no great diſtance, but where a projecting precipice wholly concealed it from their view. On the ſame day they embarked, and in four months they once more beheld the lofty cliffs of Albion towering over that ocean on which her ſons had never yet been vanquiſhed.

Here the partners of misfortune ſeparated—Jaſper alone had his companion—it was the little Edmund.

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW days after their arrival in England Jaſper ſet out on foot to viſit his friends in Cornwall. His proud heart had diſdained, during eighteen years, to aſk their ſuccour; but he had now a charge, dearer than his own exiſtence—an orphaned infant to provide for. For Edmund's ſake, therefore, more than for his own, he reſolved on undertaking the journey; and, at the end of a fortnight, he reached the ſcene from which he had eſtranged himſelf till he was almoſt forgotten.

On croſſing the moor where his father's extenſive farm once flouriſhed, he obſerved a ſtately edifice, ſurrounded with plantations, and evidently the abode of a more wealthy or ennobled poſſeſſor. He ſtopped! he ſighed! he looked at Edmund. They were both in tatters, weary, hungry, poor and friendleſs. Jaſper ſat himſelf down on the margin of a rivulet, and Edmund took his place beſide him.

him. So ſad, ſo forlorn a pair had rarely approached the houſe of affluence. They wept and talked together till the day began to ſhut in. They had no roof to ſhelter them from the night dews; they had no food to ſupply the cravings of nature; no pillow to repoſe upon after the long day's fatigue. The wind blew chilly, the ſky was dark and dreary. Edmund crept cloſe to Jaſper's arm, when from his boſom he unfolded one of the ſacred reliques, and read the following lines—

TO THE WILD BROOK.

Unheeded emblem of the mind,
When weeping twilight's ſhadows cloſe;
I wander where thy mazes wind,
And watch thy current as it flows.
Now dimpling, ſilent, calm and even,
Now brawling as in anger driv'n;
Now ruffled, foaming, madly wild,
Like the vex'd ſenſe of Sorrow's hopeleſs child.

Beſide thy ſurface now I ſee
Reflected in thy placid breaſt,
Fluſh'd Summer's painted progeny,
In ſmiles and ſweets redundant dreſt:
They flaunt their forms of varying dye
To greet thee as thou paſſeſt by:

And bending ſip thy ample wave,
And in the lucid lapſetheir boſom's lave.

While on thy tranquil breaſt appears
No freezing gale, no paſſing ſtorm,
The ſun-beam's vivid luſtre chears,
And ſeems thy ſilv'ry bed to warm.
The thronging birds with am'rous play
Sweep with their wings thy glitt'ring way;
And o'er thy banks fond zephyr blows,
To dreſs with ſweets the ſmalleſt flow'r that grows.

But when deſtroying blaſts ariſe,
And clouds o'erſhade thy with'ring bounds;
When ſwift the eddying foliage flies,
And loud the ruthleſs torrent ſounds;
Thy dimpling charms are ſeen no more,
Thy Minſtrel's carroll'd praiſe is o'er;
While not a flowret ſunny-dreſt,
Courts the chill'd current of thy alter'd breaſt.

Such is the human mind! ſerene
When Fortune's glowing hour appears;
And lovely as thy margin green,
Are buds of Hope, which Fancy rears;
Then Adulation, like the flow'r,
Bends as it greets us on our way;
But in the dark and ſtormy hour,
Leaves us unmark'd to trace our troubled way.

Jaſper now folded the paper with a ſigh of reſignation ; then bending his eyes on Edmund he perceived him ſleeping on the turf. Again he looked towards the ſtately manſion —again he felt the night air chilling his boſom. He touched Edmund's cheek, it was damp with the riſing dew, but it was ruddy as the roſe. Jaſper now thought of the tomb where Madame de Stanheim ſlept for ever. He could have envied her repoſe had his mind been capable of a ſelfiſh wiſh. Hunger had, during many days, been felt ſeverely ; the weary travellers were poorly ſheltered from the changes of the ſeaſon by one miſerable covering ; yet the onyx gem was preſerved : deſtiny had placed it in the hands of honeſty, and it was held ſacred even amidſt miſeries of want and ſorrow.

As twilight cloſed a thunder ſtorm came on : Edmund awoke in terror, and would have hid himſelf in Jaſper's boſom. The lightning flaſhed frequently, and the rain began to pour in torrents. The windows of the vaſt manſion diſplayed the ſtrong glare of tapers in the various apartments. They indiſtinctly heard the

the ſound of muſic during thoſe intervals when the thunder ceaſed to roar. Jaſper roſe from the bank, and taking Edmund in his arms, haſtened towards the gate which opened on the moor.

Again he arreſted his ſteps ; he obſerved the lower rooms filled with company ; they alſo were decorated with numberleſs branches of lights—a large party ſurrounded a ſumptuous table. Jaſper and little Edmund were both cold and hungry, for they had not touched food ſince the dawn broke on their laſt day's tedious journey.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER waiting and watching ſome minutes Jaſper addreſſed his companion—" Do you ſee that large houſe ?" ſaid he.

" Yes" replied Edmund ; " let us go in."

" Art thou hungry, Edmund ?"

" Yes,"

"Yes," ſighed the little traveller, "very hungry."

"Then thou ſhalt enter, boy," ſaid Jaſper, "thou ſhalt not die for want of food, at the gate of opulence and plenty. Thou ſhalt not ſigh to behold the prodigality of pride heaping the ſtores of luxury, while innocence and virtue pine at an humble diſtance."

"They will not let me in," ſaid Edmund. "They ſhall," cried Jaſper; "for where is the heart ſo cold as to refuſe thee a ſhelter? Thou haſt no offences to make thee odious, my poor boy; thou haſt never wronged the wealthy or oppreſſed the defenceleſs."

"They will not give me any thing," ſaid Edmund; "and yet Heaven has been liberal to them," replied Jaſper, "and perhaps they are not half ſo deſerving."

The muſic continued; the apartments were perfectly viſible by the full glare of light which illuminated every ſide. The table was ſurrounded with gueſts, the ſervants in gaudy liveries awaited the ſecond feaſt which they were deſtined to ſhare. The ſky continued dark and cloudy, excepting when the frequent flaſhes

flaſhes of lightning preſented Jaſper and his little companion as they ſtood at the iron gate which faced the building. Many ſighs eſcaped their boſom; many tears rolled down Jaſper's cheek, when he recollected the long loſt comforts of that ſpot, on which he then ſtood in miſery and ſorrow.

He looked wiſtfully towards the manſion of feſtivity. He remembered the ſpacious farm of his anceſtors—the ancient houſe of hoſpitality—its gothic caſement windows—its lofty columns of chimneys—its ſpacious porch—its venerable grove of cheſnut—its orchard—its granaries—its out-buildings—its chearful fire—its wide chimney-corner, where the traveller had often reſted; and with the potent draft beguiled the long wintry evening hour, while the wind blew loud, and the ſnow was drifted over the bleak moor. In fancy he beheld the wicker chair, which was the ſeat of his grandfather, the reſting-place of honeſt induſtry, after the day of uſeful toil. He heard in the dream of imagination, the ſong of the huſbandmen, the full chorus of feſtive glee; the loyal ſentiment vociferated loudly

as

as the brown jug went round. He then began to trace (for memory is a vivid painter when the mind dwells on loſt objects of affection) the ſolitary cheſnut walk, where he had ſo often wandered by the pale moon's ray, with his beloved Margaret; the mulberry-tree, whoſe rude bench he had carved with many a true lover's knot, and many a cypher of her name; the ſtyle, where the wintry wind had firſt given to his view the taper ancle, and the ſnow-white ſtocking of his ſoul's darling; the ſwift brook, where ſhe had quenched the thirſt of ſultry ſummer from the corner of the hat which he had won valiantly wreſtling at the wake, dreſſed with unnumbered ribbands, the envy of the ruſtics; the offering at the ſhrine of honeſt paſſion. All theſe poor Jaſper well remembered; while his heart throbbed with agony to know that they were gone for ever.

It was now near midnight. Jaſper was loſt in meditation, and Edmund had made the ſtone ſteps his pillow. Jaſper would have ſheltered the little mendicant with his torn jacket, had Neceſſity in her ſcant proviſion afforded him a ſecond garment. He knew not what

what do do; for, in all the misery of his fate he never yet had begged. He pressed the cheek of his little companion; it was burning notwithstanding that the cold rain had, during three hours, beat upon it. He felt his hand, it was dry and feverish. "My boy will die," said Jasper; "he is sick, and perhaps this sleep which silences the cry of hunger, is the sleep of death!" Edmund sighed deeply.

"Art thou in pain, boy?" enquired Jasper as he knelt beside him. Edmund made no answer.

"Tell me, art thou sick?" said Jasper, with a voice rendered inarticulate by agitation.

Edmund placed his arms round Jasper's neck as he leant over him, but still was silent.

"Speak, my dear boy, my only companion in this wide world of sorrows!" said Jasper. "Tell me if thou art in pain. I will beg for thee, though for myself I would sooner perish. I will, if they refuse me succour, steal, rather than that thou should die of hunger." Edmund could not answer him; he was overpowered with fatigue and fever. The noonday sun had scorched his little veins; the night

night rain had chilled them ; the ſtorm had terrified his ſenſes ; and he crept ſtill cloſer into Jaſper's boſom.

Terror now ſeized on all the faculties of Jaſper's ſoul. He trembled, he was nearly frantic ; twice his hand was raiſed towards the bell, and twice his proud heart ſeemed palſied at the effort. A vivid flaſh of lightning rouſed his feelings when they were almoſt benumbed with the exceſs of horror ; he rang the bell violently ; the ſound ſtarted his companion, and he ſhrieked. A ſervant came to the gate with alacrity, becauſe the loud ringing of the bell ſeemed to announce a viſitor of importance.

" Who rang the bell with ſuch authority ?" enquired the domeſtic.

" I did," ſaid Jaſper.

" By what right ?" cried the ſervant.

" The right of nature."

" Vagabond !" exclaimed the ſervant, " what do you want ?"

" Every thing !" replied Jaſper. " Food, clothing, ſhelter from the ſtorm."

The gate was cloſed abruptly. The ſervant

vant muttered his ſurprize at the inſolence of Jaſper, and returned to the portico.

"I have been raſh," ſaid Jaſper; "I have uttered the language of nature; it is not intelligible to the ears of pomp and luxury. I ſhould have been more humble—I demanded when I ſhould have begged."

"Begged!" repeated he, while his cheek flufhed with indignation—"Muſt innocence diſtreſſed ſtoop to implore, while guilty prodigality can lift its head in triumph? Oh, God! thou art the friend of thy creature! Should I be criminal in taking that which would preſerve an unoffending infant from deſtruction, but which barbarous pride denies him?"

While he was ſpeaking he obſerved the company quitting the table, and haſtening to another apartment, where the muſic invited them to dance. The ſervants removed the ſupper to their hall in the right wing of the houſe. Jaſper ſaw them diſtinctly while they took their places round the table; he beheld the former ſcene re-acted with ſtill louder revelry, ſtill broader glee!—Shouts and ſongs —mingled ſounds of voices—the fiddle and the

the tabor, proclaimed the feſtivity of the ſervants' hall ; while Edmund groaned deeply, and Jaſper, kneeling on the cold earth, uttered a prayer to Heaven for pity and protection.

CHAPTER VI.

ANOTHER hour paſſed, and Jaſper began to feel faint with hunger. The ſleep into which fatigue had lulled the infant Edmund now terminated, and he awoke in the delirium of a fever. He talked of the ocean and the ſea birds, and enquired, why he could not "walk upon the waves, and fly with wings as they did?" Every word he uttered ſeemed like a poniard in Jaſper's heart. The boy complained of thirſt ; the iron gate was not locked ; Jaſper felt the bolt ; it yielded to the preſſure of his hand ; it flew back as if to bid him take courage. He entered the ſhrubbery: he

he croſſed the lawn, he approached the window of the ſupper room. The ſaſh was open, and the table was covered with fruits and wines, ſcattered in prodigal diſorder. The ſervants were ſtill carouſing in a diſtant part of the building; Jaſper liſtened and trembled; he looked at the table—"There!" ſaid he, "there are the remnants of the feaſt, the luxurious overplus of fated oſtentation. Theſe fruits would cool poor Edmund's feveriſh and parched mouth; the ſmalleſt quantity of that wine would revive his fainting heart. I have begged—I have implored—I have aſked forgiveneſs of Heaven—I am guilty, but I am not ſelfiſh; I will only take what Edmund's miſery requires, I will not owe my own life to an action that debaſes it. How ſevere is the conflict, thought Jaſper, between honeſty and neceſſity. Why, why will the rich, the happy, ſhut their hearts againſt the wretchedneſs of humble virtue?"

Jaſper raiſed his foot to enter the window; his face was flushed with ſhame; his eyes were full of tears—"Here, on the ſpot that once was my paternal home, here to become a

robber !" ſaid he, putting his hand upon his agitated boſom, " here, at the dark hour of midnight to ſkulk like a criminal ; to know that I muſt violate my country's laws, or ſee an innocent and helpleſs infant periſh." As he ſpoke he heard ſome one approaching acroſs the ſhrubbery ; he looked back aghaſt ; the redneſs of his cheek was inſtantly changed to the paleneſs of a corpſe. " I have taken nothing," ſaid he wildly ; " it was Edmund who approached ; fear had given him ſtrength ; he had with tottering ſteps followed his friend and fellow ſufferer, and as he endeavoured to claſp his knees fell overpowered before him.

Jaſper beheld Edmund, as he thought, expiring ; pity required no incentive more powerful, even though her dictates ſhould be puniſhed by the forfeit of his own exiſtence. He leaped into the room—he filled a goblet with wine—he was retreating when a ſervant entered. Edmund's ſituation was of more importance to Jaſper than his own preſervation ; he vaulted through the window, and preſented the wine to the lips which had now loſt the power of articulation. " Swallow it, boy !" ſaid

ſaid he, " for it is the laſt perhaps that I ſhall ever offer thee." The ſervant had given the alarm, and the robber was ſeized, and dragged to the ſteps of the portico, while he loudly, and with penetrating ſorrow, entreated that the boy might not be left to periſh.

A conſultation was held among the domeſtics; and it was agreed, that Jaſper ſhould be ſecurely bound with cords, and confined in the ſtable till the following day—" Our mirth will be interrupted," ſaid one; " we ſhall be obliged to take him to a juſtice," cried another; " and this diſmal night who would like to go four miles for a begging ſailor?" Beſides, ſaid a third, " we have not half done ſupper, and we muſt have a dance; who will give up his bottle and his partner for a ragged pilferer, who deſerves to be horſe-whipped into honeſty?" Take him to the ſtable, and to-morrow Sir Martin ſhall examine him.

Jaſper was ſilent; he knew that ſuffering worth gains little commiſeration from pampered ignorance. He knew alſo that his poverty would plead againſt him, and the very neceſſity which impelled him to offend

would

would act as a ſtrong evidence in the conviction of his crime. He had no friends to plead for him, no gold to pave the pathway to forgiveneſs. He was the traveller of neceſſity—the victim of misfortune—but he was the defender of innocence, the preſerver of a fellow-creature, and therefore more worthy, more exalted, than the rich, the prodigal Sir Martin.

The ſervants having bound his arms conducted him towards the ſtable. "Take him," ſaid one, "along the cheſnut walk."

"O! not that way!" exclaimed Jaſper, not by the cheſnut walk; "all the felicities of his youthful days, all the happy hours, the moonlight walks with his loved Margaret recurred to memory, and he began to loſe his fortitude."

"Take him!" vociferated a ſurly lacquey, "I like to hear a ragged ſcoundrel chooſing his way! Take him down the cheſnut walk, by the old ſtyle that leads to the orchard."

In that orchard it had been Jaſper's early joy to gather the firſt fruit for the miſtreſs of his heart; the pang of memory was rendered more

more acute than ever, and he fell upon his knees. "Shoot me," ſaid he, "but do not drive me mad! I will not paſs that ſtyle; I will not, while theſe cords confine me, croſs that orchard."

"Bring him along!" ſaid one; "and fetch a torch that he may not avail himſelf of the darkneſs of the night, to eſcape our vigilance."

"I would not quit this ſpot," ſaid Jaſper, "for all the riches of its owner."

"Why not?" enquired his leader tauntingly. "Becauſe I would not leave my boy at the mercy of ſuch ſavage creatures."

"Bring him along!" vociferated the torch-bearer. "To-morrow he ſhall be taught to hold different language—Sir Martin will make an example of the vagabond, though I dare ſwear that my Lady will try to beg him off. It is her ſoft heart that brings all the vagrants in the country to our gate; ſhe has tears ready for every canting hypocrite, and is never happy but when ſhe is encouraging idleneſs.

Jaſper raiſed his eyes towards Heaven in gratitude for the faint gleam of hope which this information preſented

"But

"But then," ſaid another, "thank God, Sir Martin Strickland is maſter of his property. He is not ſo tender hearted as my Lady; he loves juſtice, and is not to be impoſed on by fair words and a ragged garment. Sir Martin would not be able, with only five thouſand a year, to keep open houſe at Chriſtmas for nobility, and a pack of fox hounds for the country gentlemen, and running horſes for his own amuſement, if he liſtened to every travelling beggar that came whining and whimpering to his manor. Many have been the days when ſhips have been wrecked here upon the coaſt, and ſailors have come in troops to Sir Martin for food and clothing: which my Lady would have given them but for fear of the Baronet's diſpleaſure. Indeed ſome ſay that by ſtealth ſhe has done many fooliſh acts of charity."

"Bleſs her! Bleſs her Heaven for them!" interrupted Jaſper.

"It was not long ago," continued the ſervant, after giving Jaſper a ſtroke on the ſhoulder with the end of the cord by which he led him, "only laſt Whitſuntide that ſhe made up clean ſtraw beds in one of the barns, and ordered

ordered a beaſt to be killed that ſhe might feed twenty caſt-away ſeamen with good Engliſh beef; and then the hogſheads flowed as tho' an ocean of ale had poured upon them."

"Heaven reward her!" ſaid Jaſper.

"I ſhould like to know what a ragged raſcal has to do with Heaven!" ſaid the torch-bearer. "Come, bring him along a little faſter, my coat is wet through with the rain, and I want to finiſh my ſupper"

"I have not taſted food theſe twenty-four hours," ſaid Jaſper.

"You'll have the better appetite to-morrow," replied the leader, "if Sir Martin does not make you *faſt* in priſon."—(The whole group laughed aloud.) Jaſper now ſaw by the torch light that he was croſſing the orchard; he ſighed deeply; his heart was heavy as his afflictions; the rain ceaſed, and the moon darted its pale light between the opening clouds. Jaſper looked round with an anguiſhed boſom. The dark row of cheſnut trees; the little ſtyle, the ſtately fabric where he had left Edmund, as he thought, expiring, were all viſible to his aching eyes: and he reſigned himſelf to the arms of Deſpair.

CHAPTER VII.

AT length they reached the ſtable. Jaſper was forced to enter, and then left to ruminate on his misfortunes. The agony of thought kept his eyes from cloſing; and the anxiety which he felt for Edmund's ſafety nearly maddened his brain. Seated on a ſtraw litter, cold, ſick, and weary, he heard the carriages of the gueſts rattling along the road; he ſaw the pale glimpſe of dawn enter the ſtable. He roſe and approached the window, the morning air revived him; the dews were ſcattered by the approaching ſun, and the birds were ſinging on the roof of his priſon.

His eyes eagerly wandered over the landſcape; he recollected many a well known ſpot; the diſtant hills which were gilded by the riſing ſun, ſtill preſented objects which he never had forgotten. Here and there the cultivated farms, the abodes of his earlieſt friends, enriched the country; the fields of

riſing

riſing corn waved on the upland ſcene; and the village church, whoſe gothic battlements were overrun with ivy, recalled to mind the day when he had won the prize of ſtrength, or witneſſed the harmleſs delights of ruſtic revelry.

While Jaſper ſtood contemplating the proſpect he perceived four men approaching the ſtable. They unlocked the door and commanded him to come forth—he obeyed the ſummons. They led him again acroſs the orchard, and from thence into the ſhrubbery. But what were Jaſper's ſenſations—what language can deſcribe the acute pangs that ſeemed to wring his heart when they ſtopped at the tree, the mulberry-tree, whoſe rude bench he had carved, and which ſtill preſented to his view the records of his early fond affection.

Proſtrate before the ſacred relic he kiſſed the letters, which time had not effaced, and which his tortured ſenſes too well remembered. "Here! here let me die!" ſaid Jaſper.

"No; you will hang on another ſort of tree,"

tree," cried the ſervant who guarded him. "But if theſe branches were deſtined to be your gallows, they would not long be here to remind the family of your exit.

"Why?" enquired Jaſper eagerly.

"Becauſe, only yeſterday I heard Sir Martin ſay, that the old tree ſhould be grubbed up next autumn, as it only harboured an ugly owl that diſturbed my Lady."

"The owl might be deſtroyed," ſaid Jaſper.

"Yes: but the Baronet ſays that the tree is a melancholy object from the window of the houſe, and interrupts the proſpect to yonder hills; beſides, Sir Martin has bought a pair of old-faſhioned ſtone-works, which came from Italy, which he means to place here inſtead of the tree.

"Ah!" ſighed Jaſper, "did he but know that this was once the ſcene of happineſs which pomp and ſplendour cannot feel—that theſe letters were carved by the hand of faithful love—theſe branches ſpread their leaves with every returning ſummer over the ſanctuary of betrothed affection.—"

"That

"That is more than you can tell," ſaid the ſervant.

On the bench was carved the date of that mournful day on which Jaſper was forced to quit his kindred. It was juſt eighteen years and ſeven months: he was then five-and-twenty. His beloved Margaret was two years younger. The boiſterous element over which he had been deſtined to wander, ſorrowful and expoſed to all the hardſhips of its changes, had given his features the ſtamp of premature age. His hair was already grey; his once brown cheek was ſallow and withered; no traces of his youth remained; his eyes had loſt their intelligent brilliance; his limbs their muſcular graces; his lip the ſmile which love and youth preſented; and his voice that mild, yet manly tone, which once reached the hearts of all who heard it. Never, but for the ſake of Edmund, would Jaſper have re-viſited his deſerted home: Time had eſtranged his mind from all his kindred, though it had not effaced that image from his heart, which no change of place or fortune could teach him to forget.

He had been more than an hour ſeated on the

the bench beneath the venerable tree, when his guard announced the approach of Sir Martin. Jaſper roſe, and with a modeſt bow ſtood before his Judge.

"Fellow!" ſaid the Baronet, "I find that you were laſt night detected in an attempt to rob me."

"The law of kingdoms will term it robbery, Sir Martin, though the law of Nature would acquit me."

"Nature never made a thief," cried Sir Martin.

"Becauſe ſhe provided amply for the neceſſities of all," ſaid Jaſper.

"She did not mean to feed the idle," cried the Baronet.

"But ſhe meant to reward the virtuous," replied Jaſper.

"Virtue has nothing to do with beggars," ſaid Sir Martin.

"But for the influence of virtue there would be no ſuch thing as want," replied Jaſper. "For if the poor were alſo diſhoneſt, there would not be ſuch an unequal diſtribution of Fortune's gifts."

"You

"You ſtole my wine, vagabond," ſaid Sir Martin.

"I firſt begged it."

"But you begged it ſaucily."

"Is not Honeſty ſufficiently humbled when it aſks relief from Pride."

"And has not Wealth a right to refuſe, when Inſolence demands aſſiſtance?"

"Yes; but Humanity will find a poor excuſe, when it avails itſelf of forms to prolong the miſeries of a ſuffering creature."

"You have ſeen ſervice," ſaid Sir Martin.

"I have alſo ſeen happier days," replied Jaſper, ſhaking a tear from his eye.

"You are, I believe, a vagrant."

"What do you call a vagrant?" enquired Jaſper calmly.

"A vagabond that has no home."

"Then I am a vagrant; for I have no home, no friends, no means of life, excepting thoſe which toil affords, and they are but ſcanty."

"You ſhould be humble—"

"So I would be, were I leſs poor," ſaid Jaſper.

"I doubt that you are honeſt."

"I do not queſtion *your* integrity, Sir Martin,

tin, though *you* poſſeſs all the gifts of Fortune; why then ſhould you ſuſpect me, who am poor and ſtarving? Does want look like diſhoneſty?"

"You are idle—"

"May not the toil of eighteen years hope for a few days of reſt? Muſt the poor ſeaman have no reſpite from his labour, while the rich man grows ſick with eaſe?" ſaid Jaſper.

"What made you ſo wretched?" ſaid Sir Martin, while with his cane he pointed to the tattered jacket.

"That which made you rich, Sir Martin; deſtiny."—The brief yet rational reply which Jaſper made diſconcerted Sir Martin; who, though born to the inheritance of wealth, had been wholly uneducated; and who, while he diſplayed the prodigal gifts of Fortune, was a ſtranger to the luxury of benefiting his fellow-creatures.

Jaſper had been the pupil of neceſſity: the early part of his life had been paſſed in cultivating his mind; for though reared in ruſtic ſcenes, he had been intuitively taught to know the value of extenſive knowledge; and if his mind had not been as expanded as his wiſhes, it

it was the want of books, the circumſcribed circle of ſociety in which he moved, that limited his ſtudies. But Jaſper had known many a change of fortune, in many a climate: he had been once round the world on a voyage of obſervation: he had not let any occaſion paſs in which he had failed to cultivate the inquiring propenſity which inſtinct plants in almoſt every boſom. Jaſper, while wandering an outcaſt from his home, found perpetually objects to excite an intereſt which never warmed the boſom of Sir Martin, in his abode of empty oſtentation, ſurrounded by the luxuries of life, and amuſed by the fleeting joys of viſionary happineſs.

Finding that he ſhould acquire little advantage by verbal examination, Sir Martin now began to extort a confeſſion of what he conſidered as the criminal propenſity of Jaſper's mind. "I believe you to be an impoſtor," ſaid the Baronet. "I am certain that yours is not the language of an uncultivated brute."

"No, Sir Martin, it is the language of a man—a thinking, wretched, perſecuted man," anſwered Jaſper, with modeſt pride. "It is

eaſe

eaſe and luxury that brutalize man: the ſons of Sorrow and Neceſſity are taught to know the value of mental cultivation."

"What child is that which you left laſt night beneath my window?"

"An orphan."

"How came he under your protection?"

"He was placed there by an all-ſeeing Providence."

"Has he no friends?"

"Yes; one, who conſigned him to my care—one, who will not forſake him."

"And what brought you into Cornwall?"

"Neceſſity; which makes the feeling heart do that for others, which it would diſdain to attempt for ſelfiſh gratification."

"Have you any relations in this part of the country?"

"None!" ſaid Jaſper with a ſigh.—As he ſpoke Lady Strickland deſcended the ſteps of the portico—Edmund walked by her ſide—he was cleanly dreſt; and though his cheek was paler than uſual, his countenance more languid, ſtill he looked gay and happy. The inſtant his eye caught that of Jaſper, he flew towards

towards him, he clafped his knees, hung round him, and was delighted to extacy. Jafper's heart throbbed with emotion. His beard was of many days growth; his cheek retained a fcar which an Indian had made by the ftroke of a tomahawk; his countenance retained no trait of its original beauty. But Lady Strickland was not fo changed as to be unknown to Jafper: he beheld his Margaret, the darling of his youngeft, fondeft affections, looking at him with eyes of pity, though unconfcious that his mifery firft originated in her unkindnefs.

"I hope, Sir Martin, that you will acquit the poor fellow," faid Lady Strickland. "I feel greatly intereſted in his fituation, for he looks as though he had feen happier days."

Jafper had fcarcely power to breathe; his limbs trembled, his heart beat, his colour changed; the tone of Margaret's voice electrified his brain, and he was mute with conſternation.

"He looks faint and exhauſted—bring him fome food and wine," continued Lady Strickland. "He has not ſtrength to plead his cauſe; it is cruel to oppreſs the feeble and defence-

leſs. Sit down beneath this tree—recollect yourſelf."

"I do!" ſaid Jaſper feebly.

"Compoſe your agitation, Sir Martin will render juſtice; he will not ſee you perſecuted farther; you have already ſuffered too much."

"I have indeed!" ſighed Jaſper.

"The ſmall offence you have committed was prompted by neceſſity," ſaid Lady Strickland. "It was not a wanton robbery; you did not deprive Sir Martin of any thing that concerned his happineſs; it was but a venial fault, and you muſt be pardoned."

"By what rule, my Lady?" ſaid Sir Martin ſternly.

"The laws of humanity are not circumſcribed," replied Lady Strickland. "Suppoſing, Sir Martin, that you had ſtolen a treaſure from this man, do you not think that he would have ſhewn you mercy?"

Jaſper ſhuddered.

"I have my doubts," replied Sir Martin.

"Would you not have forgiven him?" ſaid Lady Strickland, addreſſing Jaſper.

Jaſper made no anſwer.

"Speak,

"Speak, fellow!" vociferated Sir Martin.

"No!" replied Jaſper firmly.

"Then I was deceived," ſaid Lady Strickland; "I fancied I could trace the heart in the features. I thought I knew you."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Jaſper.

"Why!" ſaid Lady Strickland.

"Sir Martin would then indeed be mercileſs: yet death would be my beſt deliverer from ſorrow, could I but behold my poor boy ſecure from the perils of adverſity."

Jaſper was ſeated on the bench, beneath the mulberry tree; Edmund's arm hung over his knee, while he looked wiſtfully in his face. Lady Strickland had once a ſon: he had died at an early age. The clothes which Edmund now wore had been his: they were rich and becoming: he looked as lovely as an angel. Jaſper kiſſed his hand; his tears flowed upon it. Lady Strickland's heart was penetrated by the evident ſenſibility of Jaſper's mind.

"Ah!" ſaid he, "how thankful am I to Heaven that thou, Edmund, haſt found a friend, though at the peril of my exiſtence. Thus a ſecond time have I preſerved thee from death."

"A second time!" said Lady Strickland.

"Yes; once from the yawning deep—from the unfathomable gulph did I snatch this boy—that gulph where the ill fated Baroness de Stanheim, his mother, perished. In the cavity of a bleak rock have I entombed her. It is a solitary grave, but it is a quiet one: there neither pride nor persecution can violate the sleep of death: there too rests the bones of an unhappy exile—a shipwrecked man, whom destiny had forced to endure the worst of human calamities."

"Indeed!" said Lady Strickland, "what calamity?"

"Eternal separation from the object of his love—"

"Why were they separated?" enquired Lady Strickland, changing colour, and speaking faintly.

"Because she was the victim of avarice: a wealthier suitor, a more advantageous marriage."

Jasper could not proceed—

Lady Strickland sunk on the bench and closed her eyes, while her features were fixed

in

in a ghaſtly paleneſs. The ſervants were diſmiſſed.

"Margaret!" cried Sir Martin, "what ſudden ſurprize affects you ſo ſtrongly?—what has the vagabond ſaid, to alarm your ſenſibility?"—Lady Strickland did not attend to Sir Martin's queſtion; her whole ſoul was abſorbed by the miſeries of compunction. The Baronet now took her hand; he ſeated himſelf beſide her; he folded his arm about her liſtleſs form. Jaſper was wild with agony. For the firſt day in his life he beheld his rival —the man who had robbed his ſoul of its repoſe—the huſband of that woman whoſe image had perpetually haunted him in the ſtormy hour, upon the high-waving topmaſt, on the loudly roaring waves, or ſmoother expanſe of a calm ſummer ſea. No time, no place had, for a ſingle hour, ſevered her idea from his brain: he had ſtruggled with his anguiſh till the fatal hour when deſtiny had brought it to a climax.

CHAP,

CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER ſeveral minutes of ſilent agony, Lady Strickland, with a faultering voice, again addreſſed herſelf to Jaſper: "To my care you muſt conſign this boy," ſaid ſhe. "I have no children—and he ſhall be my adopted ſon. You ſay that you ſnatched him from the waves—that his mother periſhed—that you buried her in the ſolitary rock where the bones of a deſerted lover reſted? Alas! there is ſo much intereſt, ſuch penetrating ſorrow in the fate of this poor orphan, that I can never part with him. But the lover who periſhed, what do you know of him?"

"That he was the inhabitant of a ſteep rock which hung over the ſea; that there he built a wretched hovel, lived on wild weeds, and the produce of a ſolitary iſland; that there he died!"

"Of what country was he?" ſaid Lady Strickland.

"He

"He was an Engliſhman," replied Jaſper, while his dark but ſunken eyes watched the emotions of her ſoul.

"How came he on the iſland?"

"Shipwrecked."

"How long ſince?"

"Juſt eighteen years."

"And what is your authority for ſuppoſing that he was a deſerted lover?"

"Letters, which I found in his cloſed hovel."

"Produce them," ſaid Lady Strickland, with a faultering voice.

"Pardon me, Madam," replied Jaſper; "they were placed in my keeping by the decree of myſterious deſtiny, and I was not authorized by the ſpirit of their departed owner to divulge his ſecret: thoſe letters were the bonds of ſacred confidence, the tranſcript of affection; they muſt not be violated."

"How long had he been dead, when you found the letters?"

"O! many, many years. His bones had been whitened by the ſea breeze; his form had wholly decayed, or perhaps fed the ravenous maw of the ſea-bird."

Lady Strickland ſunk back and fainted.

Sir Martin was alarmed: he knew, for his ſake, that Jaſper Woodville, the farmer's only ſon, had been ſent to ſea, and never after heard of. The paleneſs which chilled the lip and cheek of his conſcience-ſtricken wife, convinced him that the ſailor's ſtory had pierced her heart. He flew towards the houſe for aſſiſtance; the ſhrubbery was extenſive. Jaſper watched him out of ſight, and then throwing himſelf at Lady Strickland's feet, gave way to the exceſs of ſorrow. He gazed on her countenance; he preſſed her to his heart:—ſhe was inſenſible; ſhe ſcarcely ſeemed to breathe. Sir Martin again approached them. Jaſper heard his footſteps: he was tortured, wild, diſtracted: again he preſſed Lady Strickland to his heart—"For the laſt time!" ſaid he, in an agony of deſpair, "for the laſt—*laſt* time, Oh Margaret! thy wretched lover! thy exiled victim holds thee to his aching boſom."

Sir Martin ſaw Jaſper, but did not hear diſtinctly the frantic language which he uttered. "Seize the villain!" exclaimed the Baronet; "ſeize the audacious vagrant!"

"Yet

"Yet ſuffer me to ſpeak one word to Lady Strickland!" cried Jaſper, "one ſhort word, and I will then ſubmit with fortitude."

"What would you ſay?" enquired Sir Martin, ſternly.

"I would recommend to her care this little orphan; I would conjure her, for the ſake of a loſt, wretched man, to ſuccour and protect the infant Edmund, the heir of the Baron de Stanheim."

"We will protect him," replied Sir Martin.

"Promiſe me moſt ſacredly that you never will deſert him," cried Jaſper, falling on his knees before Sir Martin. At this moment Lady Strickland's eyes opened faintly: ſhe ſaw the agitated Jaſper proſtrate on the earth, with his hands claſped in the agony of grief, and his eyes blinded with tears. "What new cauſe for ſorrow haſt thou, unhappy man?" ſaid Lady Strickland. "Why do I ſee you ſtill in the attitude of ſupplication?"

"Imploring an aſylum for this boy, this offſpring of the Baroneſs de Stanheim," replied Jaſper.

"He has found one," ſaid Lady Strickland; "he

" he ſhall never know any other home but this; he ſhall find in me a mother."

Jaſper roſe, and with a firm voice exclaimed, " Now, Heaven! I obey their will with humble reſignation!" Then turning to the domeſtics, he added, " Lead me where you chuſe, for all places are alike to me."

" Not a priſoner!" ſaid Lady Strickland; " Sir Martin will not be ſo barbarous. The being who at the hazard of his own life preſerved this boy, deſerves at leaſt ſome pity. The ſpirit of the loſt Woodville, of Madame de Stanheim, will whiſper to your heart, and plead for his forgiveneſs."

" But what will the country ſay if I do not render juſtice? What will become of my reputation, if I pardon a robber and a vagrant?" ſaid Sir Martin. " At any rate, I muſt have time to conſider the matter. Meanwhile you may go with the ſervants and get ſome refreſhment."

" Not from the bounty of that man who calls me robber; no, Sir Martin, not from the hand which ſtabbed my peace of mind, will I accept the means of life. The only favour I

aſk

aſk is liberty to depart, to forget that ever I beheld this ſpot—this fatal ſpot.

" Let him depart," cried Lady Strickland. " I intreat you, Sir Martin, to let the unhappy being enjoy the only birth-right which Fortune has allowed him—that liberty, without which all human enjoyments are but viſionary."

Sir Martin pauſed. The ſervants who ſtood round Jaſper ſighed when they beheld his manly, though dejected countenance; his ſallow cheek, his dark eyes gliſtening through tears, as they were fixed on the fate of little Edmund.

" You may go," cried Sir Martin; " but upon condition that you never again viſit this part of the country."

" Not to enquire after my poor boy?" ſaid Jaſper; " perhaps to bring him joyful tidings."

" Yes; to ſee Edmund!" ſaid Lady Strickland. " Sir Martin will not refuſe you ſo ſmall a favour; you who preſerved him from the ſtormy ocean."

" Well; begone!" ſaid Sir Martin, ſternly, as he quitted the group, and turned towards the

the houſe. Lady Strickland did not follow: ſhe loitered with Edmund, to bid Jaſper a long farewell.

CHAPTER IX.

AS ſoon as the Baronet was out of ſight, Lady Strickland took a purſe from her pocket filled with money and offered it to Jaſper. He ſtarted back with a look of ſurprize, which ſeemed to proceed from a ſenſation of horror. "Keep—keep your ill-gotten gold," ſaid Jaſper, "you will want it to conſole you." Lady Strickland ſighed, as ſhe looked earneſtly at Jaſper, whoſe eyes were turned from her with a penſive melancholy, while his cheek was ſuffuſed with a fluſh which memory produced as it darted through his brain. He was turning towards the gate, when Lady Strickland again addreſſed him.

"I beg you to ſtay a moment: your looks, your manners have ſomething myſterious in them.

them. I have ſome recollection of your features: where have I ſeen you?"

"Here," replied Jaſper, ſighing deeply.

"At no other place?" enquired Lady Strickland.

"None," ſaid Jaſper.

"Then I was miſtaken. I fancied that I knew your face, your voice; indeed, there appeared to me an intimate acquaintance which my memory claimed, in every thing you did and uttered."

"Perhaps I reſemble a perſon that you once knew," ſaid Jaſper.

"It may be ſo," replied Lady Strickland. "Indeed, it muſt be ſo; and yet—" ſhe pauſed, as ſhe fixed her eyes on Jaſper's countenance. Her inquiſitive look oppreſſed him, and again he was turning away towards the gate.

"Stay till to-morrow," ſaid Lady Strickland. "Take ſome refreſhment—I muſt be convinced—I think I know you." Her voice was tremulous; her colour became more pale; ſhe leant againſt the bench beneath the mulberry-tree. Her eyes retraced the letters which Jaſper's hand had carved.

" You are weary—you are faint: reſt yourſelf on this ſeat: it has often been the ſcene of ſorrow."

" To whom?" cried Jaſper, eagerly.

" To me," replied Lady Strickland.

" So wealthy, ſo ſurrounded by every ſplendour, can you be wretched? It is the ſon of toil, the labourer of misfortune, that is ſubject to the miſeries of life; the ſea-beaten ſailor, the poor unhappy wandering exile, whoſe lot is ſorrow. But you are placed where ſuch anxieties, ſuch fears, ſuch perils never can annoy you. The lap of luxury is ſoft and ſoothing; it lulls to reſt all remembrance of the unhappy."

" You ſpeak with an energy, and in words that I ſhould not expect from one in your ſituation," ſaid Lady Strickland.

" Why, Madam? Does the outward garb always exhibit a picture of the inward mind? Cannot virtue, feeling, ſentiment, inhabit the ſame breaſt that poverty oppreſſes? Is it the ſtamp of fortune that gives value to the gifts of Nature?"

" Go on! you aſtoniſh me!" ſaid Lady Strickland.

"Why are you aſtoniſhed? Is man ſo dull a creature, that he can learn nothing in the book of obſervation? I have travelled—I have read. Why then ſhould this ragged covering throw a ſhade on all that reaſon has implanted in my heart? I have been taught in the beſt ſchool—by the moſt ſevere, though by the trueſt maſter."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; by adverſity."

"You have known better days," ſaid Lady Strickland.

"Oh! I have known the happieſt, the ſweeteſt hours that ever ſhone on this worldly path of viciſſitude. I have been the moſt bleſt of human beings: I have ſeen the ſmile of fond affection, the tear of ſympathy: I have heard the ſigh of dear regret; but I have alſo felt the chilling breath of ſcorn, the ſting of perſecution."

"Tell me your name!" ſaid Lady Strickland, with a faultering voice.

"A name of ſo little importance cannot intereſt you," replied Jaſper—"a name that has been ſo long forgotten."

"By

"By whom?"

"By all the world; but moſt by her who, when her mind was uncontaminated by the love of wealth, was the treaſure of my ſoul."

"You alarm, you terrify me! I think"—Lady Strickland heſitated—"No, no, it cannot be," added ſhe, with a forced ſmile: "The exile whom you buried in the deſart rock was——"

"An unhappy lover," interrupted Jaſper; who perceiving by the agitated tone of Lady Strickland's voice that ſhe was doubtful whether or not ſhe knew him, now again thought it prudent to miſlead her. He reflected that a knowledge of his ſufferings could not be productive of any advantage either to herſelf or to him—ſhe being the wife of Sir Martin, and Jaſper too proud to incur an obligation."—After ſeveral moments, during which Lady Strickland's heart throbbed with contending conflicts, ſhe again intreated that he would acquaint her with his name. Jaſper was ſilent.

"Have you ever heard of the family of Woodville?" enquired Lady Strickland, with a voice feeble and inarticulate.

"The ſon—the ill-fated Jaſper."

"Yes; there was a ſon, an only ſon," interrupted Lady Strickland. "The moſt worthy, the moſt regretted of mortals."

Jaſper's ſoul was agitated almoſt to frenzy: his whole frame trembled; his lip became as pale as aſhes.

"He was ſhipwrecked," ſaid he; "he was the inhabitant of the ſolitude I mentioned: the hovel on the ſea rock was his abode: he will trouble you no more."

"Then every hope is vaniſhed," ſighed Lady Strickland. "The delulions of a fond fancy muſt be for ever buried in his grave."—After a ſhort pauſe ſhe continued—

"Was the unhappy exile ever married? Eighteen years have paſt ſince he was heard of laſt. His father quitted his farm heart-broken; his family has ſunk into decay; and Sir Martin, not four years ſince, deſtroyed the old farm-houſe where poor Jaſper was born: no trace of it remains, excepting the oak room, which is now the ſervants' hall; it was at the eaſt end of the building, and for the ſake of Jaſper, I conjured Sir Martin to preſerve it."

"Did you remember him ſo kindly?"

"Why ſhould I not?" ſaid Lady Strickland. "He loved me—alas! too well. I was the cauſe of his abandoning his home. Heaven can bear witneſs that I have never known one year of happineſs ſince his departure. Beneath this tree I have ſat whole hours alone and ſorrowful. Theſe cyphers, which he engraved, I have bathed a thouſand times with tears."

"Yet I am told that this tree is to be levelled ſhortly," ſaid Jaſper. "That theſe rude records of affection are to be deſtroyed—"

"Sir Martin will have it ſo. He thinks that the ſhadows which the broad branches ſpread, only cheriſh the melancholy which pervades my mind."

"Poor Woodville!" ſighed Jaſper. "His weary ſpirit ſhall reſt for ever: he will never more diſturb your days: he is now tranquil!"

"Would to Heaven that I were equally ſo," ſaid Lady Strickland. "But the certitude of his fate muſt be the ſolace of my affections: the miſery of hope will no longer keep from my mind the balm of reſignation. The few

ſhort

ſhort days which I am deſtined to paſs in this weary ſcene ſhall be devoted to the memory of his virtues. And if his happy ſpirit, emancipated from the ſorrows of exiſtence, demands of me more than regret, I truſt that fate will inflict the puniſhment I merit."

"There is one promiſe that would ſoothe his ſhade, even in the deſart's ſolitude."

"Do you think ſo? Name it."

"Your kindneſs to poor Edmund."

"Did he know the parents of poor Edmund?" ſaid Lady Strickland.

"He knew his mother, the Baroneſs de Stanheim," ſaid Jaſper.

"Perhaps he loved her?" cried Lady Strickland, eagerly.

"He loved but one—one early object of his affections: her name was Margaret."

"Her other name?"

"Trelawny."

Lady Strickland raiſed her eyes towards Heaven, and feebly ſighed, "*Forgive me!*"

At this moment Sir Martin appeared haſtening towards them. Jaſper availed himſelf of the opportunity to eſcape from farther inveſtigation,

tion, and inſtantly departed. Lady Strickland's confuſion, her agitated features, her aching heart, prevented her obſerving him till he had paſſed the gate, and was haſtening acroſs the moor at ſome diſtance. Sir Martin's frown evinced his diſapprobation of her conduct, in having remained ſo long in converſation with Jaſper; and they ſilently proceeded towards the houſe together.

CHAPTER X.

SAD and impreſſive were Jaſper's ruminations as he re-croſſed the moor. Frequently did he look back with aching eyes towards the ſplendid abode of the rich Sir Martin; and as often did Fancy picture to his mind the birth-place of the Woodvilles. The pang of ſelf-reproach ſunk deep into his heart, when he reflected that during his long abſence he had never written to his family; that he had never,

never, by the attentions of filial duty, ſoftened the miſery of compunction in the boſom of his raſh father. But that father had meanly accepted a bribe to tranſport his devoted ſon: he had been tempted by Sir Martin's gold to baniſh from his home the pride of his name, the honour of his family.

Sir Martin Strickland was born and educated in Cornwall: his father was penurious even to wretchedneſs. The heir to his property had received no education, no expanſion of mind, that could teach him the true value of thoſe treaſures which he was born to inherit, and which had been amaſſed by the privation of every earthly happineſs.

Shortly after his father's death, Sir Martin by chance met with Margaret Trelawny: ſhe was then on a ſhort viſit to a diſtant relation near Penzance. The report that ſhe was ſpeedily to be the wife of young Woodville awakened the jealouſy of the wealth-elated Baronet, and he made her ſuch propoſals as ſtaggered her fortitude. Still the memory of her promiſes to Woodville ſuſtained her heart under the trial which human vanity inflicted, when

when the rank and fortune of Sir Martin were placed in competition with the worth of Jaſper.

The hour of final deciſion at length arrived, and Margaret was decided. The virtues which ennobled Woodville's mind ſurpaſſed the ſplendours of Fortune's favours, and the Baronet's propoſals were firmly rejected. The mind of Woodville's father was not the prototype of Jaſper's: he was ſordid. Strong temptations were held forth, a large increaſe of landed property, of money, cattle, intereſt and conſequence, bought him over to the purpoſe of Sir Martin; and Jaſper was the victim. A ſhip bound to India was at that period anchored off the coaſt within a few miles of Woodville's farm. A number of Corniſh ſeamen were to embark. Jaſper went to witneſs their departure. A ſufficient quantity of gold had been circulated to ſway the feelings of four deſperate men—the ill-fated Woodville was forced on board the veſſel at midnight; and before the dawn broke on the eaſtern ocean, the crew had loſt ſight of Britain.

Woodville's

Woodville's agony was indeſcribable. A ſullen melancholy preyed upon his mind, and he refuſed every thing that approached him in the form of conſolation. After they had been ſeveral days at ſea, the myſtery was unfolded to him; with the addition of the torturing aſſurance that Margaret had been an accomplice in the outrage which had been planned againſt him. Rage, deſpair, and diſappointed paſſion rouzed his mind, and armed it to reſiſt the miſeries of his fortune. From that hour he bore his exile with a proud ſilence which diſdained even to reproach his enemies. Year after year he was borne on the boiſterous element, reſigned to a deſtiny at which he did not repine, becauſe it was unmerited; while Margaret waſted her days in regret and ſorrow, ſeeking in vain for that repoſe which all the treaſures of the world could not afford her.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XI.

WOODVILLE purſued his way till the cloſe of twilight, when he arrived at a ſmall public-houſe by the road ſide: the door was open; but the conſciouſneſs that he had not money to purchaſe refreſhment, prevented his attempting to enter.

He ſeated himſelf at the door bench. The evening was ſerene; the rich glow of the ſky threw its reflected tints on every ſurrounding object. The diſtant hills, which were partly covered by the vapours ariſing from the ocean, caught the purpling luſtre: and the wind, which ſcarcely ruffled the woods, fanned with its gentleſt breath the warm cheek of the life-weary traveller; for ſuch at this moment was the wandering Woodville.

He had only taken his ſeat to reſt for a few moments, for he purpoſed, though fatigued and faint with hunger, continuing his journey during the night: the moſt chilling damps were

were leſs intolerable than the noon-day ſun. The moon, which had already riſen above the mountains, promiſed its light to chear his path, and to aid the penſive melancholy which abſorbed his ſoul. Amidſt the ſilence of midnight ſolitude he hoped to indulge his ſighs, unheard by the ever-watchful ear of curioſity: he anticipated the ſoothing hour when his tear would fall as the full heart was relieved of the burthen that oppreſſed it.

While he was by thought abſtracted from that world which ſeemed to preſent a ſeries of immitigable ſorrows, the landlord, with a look of compaſſion, approached him. There was ſomething in the countenance of Woodville that was prepoſſeſſing: his features were manly and regular; his eyes black and penetrating; his figure had been finely proportioned, but hardſhip and fatigue had robbed it of many graces, leaving only the feeble outline of a vivid and harmonious picture.; his addreſs, his voice, his words were ſuch as marked the diſparity between his fortune and his intellects; for the meaneſt garb of poverty cannot conceal the innate luſtre of ſuperior orga-

organization. The chilling touch of adverſity cannot freeze the current of the ſoul; whatever fools may aver, or ſceptics argue to the contrary. The ſtamp which Nature ſets upon her beſt works is not ſubject to the power of Fortune; and when even Time demands it as the tribute of mortality, Fame reprints it on her proudeſt and moſt unperiſhable records.

Woodville was poor, oppreſſed, and unfortunate: yet with all theſe diſadvantages his exterior preſented, at the firſt glance, thoſe mental qualities which placed him far above the race of ſophiſticated beings who, like the animalculæ which fully the clear ſpring, contaminate ſociety. Had he choſen any path of life where the perſpective promiſed an accumulation of fame or fortune, their attainment was more than probable with ſuch powers of mind as he poſſeſſed; but, like the ill-fated Chatterton, his proud ſoul ſhrunk while he beheld Virtue and Genius bending the knee before degraded Greatneſs. He choſe the reſtleſs ocean as his home, rather than wait the ſmiles, or linger at the gate of Pride and Oſtentation.

Many

Many have been the victims of concealed misfortune: many have preſented to the eye of inquiſitive commiſeration the forced ſmile of contentment, while the heart has throbbed at the tauntings of adverſity. The pride of ennobled natures dreads the the reproof of overacted friendſhip: the keen pang of wounded ſelf-love, proceeding from the zeal of buſy admonition, ſinks deep into the heart; and by palſying its moſt fervid feeling, takes from it the powers of emulation. Hence do we frequently behold the ſons of Genius ſinking into the apathy of indifference, and ſuffering the moſt illuſtrious attributes of nature to wither into nothing; while we contemplate the ſterling gifts of Nature neglected and forſaken, though the falſe tinſel of Fortune paſſes current with the giddy crowd, and receives the adulation of the million.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XII.

WOODVILLE raiſed his eyes as the landlord approached him, and as ſuddenly quitted his ſeat to purſue his loneſome journey. The cloſe of day had brought with it ſuch refreſhing gales, that his feveriſh cheek no longer dried the tear which fell upon it. The landlord looked earneſtly at Woodville—"Will you take a draught of ſomething to refreſh you?" ſaid he, ſmiling, with rather a compaſſionating than a chearful countenance.

Woodville, though faint and thirſty, with diffidence declined the offer!

"You ſhall, you muſt," ſaid the landlord; "this bench is damp; the air is chilly; you had better take my advice and enter the houſe; there is a fire, and you ſhall take ſome refreſhment." Woodville thanked his benevolent landlord, but was departing.

"Come, come, you muſt eat and drink; I will

will not charge you any thing. A ſailor deſerves the good-will of his countrymen; he is the guardian of their ſafety. It would be hard indeed if, out of the great benefits they inſure to us, we ſhould deny them a ſmall return."—Woodville ſighed, and touched his hat. The eloquence of a grateful heart was not loſt upon an uncultivated obſerver, though it had failed to excite an intereſt in the boſom of the wealthy. The contraſt between the landlord and Sir Martin ſtruck the heart of Woodville, and his foot involuntarily paſſed the threſhold.

A warm and decent room received the landlord and his weary gueſt; and in a few minutes a jug of ale, with a cold joint of meat, were ſet before them. "I have not yet ſupped," ſaid the hoſpitable Andrews, "and we will empty our jug together. Thank God, there is plenty in the cellar."—Woodville was ſilent, becauſe his heart was too full to give his language utterance. His hand trembled while he raiſed the jug to his lips, and he drank ſparingly.

"Drink again!" ſaid Andrews, "I do not grudge you; then why ſhould you be ſparing of

of the liquor. Look at my ſign, the Old Oak, this is my caſtle, over which its branches have flouriſhed twelve long years; and they have ſheltered many a poor weary traveller, when higher roofs have denied them a reſting-place."

"I believe you," ſaid Woodville.

"You may," interrupted Andrews. "For though the rich Sir Martin Strickland, our magiſtrate, and our over-ruler, has often threatened to take away my licence, and turn me out of my oak ſhelter——"

"For what?" enquired Woodville, eagerly.

"Why, for what he calls harbouring vagabonds, and encouraging idleneſs; but I deny the charge—though I never refuſed a draught to the thirſty, or a kind word to the unfortunate."

As Andrews uttered theſe words, the firſt morſel reached the lips of Woodville. The food was inviting, becauſe it was ſweetened by the hand of Hoſpitality.

"Eat away, my honeſt!" ſaid Andrews; "the produce of Nature was deſigned for the poor as well as the lofty. So ſays my Lady Margaret;

Margaret; but ſhe, poor ſoul, was born ſomewhat below the topmaſt pinnacle of pride. I remember her when ſhe was the daughter of old Trelawny—"

Woodville's hand ſhook convulſively.

"Aye, and as pretty a girl as any in Cornwall!" reſumed Andrews. "But the devil would tempt her in the ſhape of a rich Baronet, and ſhe has paid dearly enough for her folly."

"Is ſhe unhappy?" enquired Woodville.

"Why, they ſay that conſcience ſorely troubles her," replied Andrews; "and well it may, for it is ſaid that ſome ſixteen or eighteen years ago ſhe played a knaviſh ſort of a trick to a young farmer's ſon here in our parts; a fellow that was worthy a ſcore of Sir Martins, with all his money into the bargain."

"And what became of him?" ſaid Jaſper.

"Why, he was ſent beyond ſeas, and never after heard of. To be ſure, his father repented ſorely after he was gone; for the Baronet led him a ſorry ſort of a life, and things ſomehow went at ſixes and ſevens: this old Woodville ſold the farm for a mere modicum, and went God knows where."

"Well, and what followed?" ſaid Jaſper, raiſing the jug to repleniſh his fortitude.

"Why, ſoon after he was gone, down went the old farm houſe as flat as the moor; and a fine ſtately manſion ſoon ſhewed us the difference betwixt a warm habitation and a cold heart. The ale-cellar was converted into an ice-houſe, and the oak room, where Honeſty and Labour uſed to regale at ſun-ſet, was made a hall of idleneſs for a tribe of liveried varlets, who ſeldom ſee the ſun till it has made half its day's journey."

"How does Sir Martin employ his hours?"

"How does he waſte them? you ſhould ſay," replied Andrews. "Why, he lives all his days for other people; he thinks of nothing but of making himſelf the talk of the country; he keeps open houſe for the rich, and a cloſed gate for the poor; he feeds horſes, and builds kennels for hounds, to amuſe the gentry, while the beggar looks on hungry and houſeleſs; he talks loudly about a good name, but forgets the road where he may chance to find one; and he is a rigid dealer in juſtice, though Heaven never yet gave

gave him a licence for humanity. It was not ſo in old Woodville's days; he had a door that would open without a lacquey, and a cellar that did not freeze, but warm the heart; and yet old Woodville could not be contented."

"Why, ſo plentifully bleſt, did he covet more?" ſaid Jaſper.

"Becauſe he ſaw that riches gets a man higher praiſe and more power than honeſty," replied Andrews. "He found that Sir Martin, though nothing but a churl, was more reſpected than himſelf, with all his good-nature. Then what did he do? Why, he thought that the more gold and the more land he got, the broader folks would ſmile, and the lower they would bow; he ſold his peace of mind, and found that money is but a poor exchange for a quiet conſcience."

"He remained ſome time in Cornwall?" ſaid Jaſper.

"Yes; but what good did that do? Sir Martin was always haraſſing him, and trying to find fault. If by chance a dog croſſed the manor which the Baronet then held, he was

ſhot without judge or jury. If cattle ſtrayed upon his ground, why they were popped into the pound, and a proſecution threatened without mercy. Then if any of the farmers' people looked awry at Sir Martin, why they were ſquat in the ſtocks next market-day, as an example to others."

"Was Sir Martin ſo apt to take offence—he who had been ſo confirmed an offender?"

"O yes; he was terribly *litigacious*; he never could let law reſt while he had that which could buy it. But my Lady, poor ſoul! has always been inclined to make the burthen light to the weak-ſhouldered: ſhe has taken the load from many a heart; though, if report may be credited, her own was heavily laden; for ſhe never forgot the day when young Woodville was ſent beyond ſeas, to plough the rough waves, and to bear the hardſhips of a ſailor's life. You know what he ſuffered."

"I do indeed!" ſighed Jaſper.

"Aye, many a ſtormy night has he thought of my Lady, I'll warrant him," ſaid Andrews; "and many a deep ſigh has he heaved when he recollected the ſcenes he once knew at the

the old farm-houſe. Well, well! it will not laſt long; all will not go well at the mill when the miller is not honeſt. I'll venture to wager a trifle that Sir Martin will not long enjoy his riches; and who knows but my Lady and her firſt ſweetheart may yet come together."

"Never!" cried Jaſper, while the idea electrified his heart.

"Though mayhap the change of climate has altered him, and my Lady might not like a poor weather-beaten ſailor," ſaid Andrews, "Fortune will make folks forget themſelves; and time changes all things."

"It does indeed!" ſaid Woodville, with a ſigh.

"Now I'll wager ſomething that you have ſeen better days," cried Andrews: "you don't look as if you had been born to the fortune which you now inherit. But cheer up, and remember that there is a good friend above who never forſakes the honeſt."

"How do you know that I am honeſt?" enquired Jaſper.

"I wager my life you are," ſaid Andrews. "I have always looked for honeſty in rags; and I was never diſappointed."

" It is too often the decree of deſtiny," ſaid Woodville, " and yet Sir Martin is rich, tho' unfeeling."

" That is another matter," interrupted Andrews, placing his left finger on his noſe. " I did not ſay that *wealth* was always the ſign-poſt to honeſty. Sir Martin has plenty of gold, but he ſtill wants ſomething better."

" And what is that?"

" The good-will of mankind. He may buy their ſmiles, but he cannot purchaſe their affections. A little wealth, well managed, may ſecure thoſe friends which great ſtores can only dazzle. For this reaſon the very name of Woodville makes the ſame heart dance, which ſinks heavily when our Baronet is mentioned."

" I ſhould have thought that the name of Woodville would have been forgotten," ſaid Jaſper.

" That it can never be," replied Andrews; " for my Lady every twentieth of May gives alms at the old tree, in commemoration of the day on which young Woodville was baniſhed."

" Does Sir Martin permit ſuch a teſtimony to be ſo publicly diſplayed?"

"Yes," replied Andrews; "becauſe my Lady calls it her day of tribute; and Sir Martin thinks it is in memory of her deciſion in his favour."

"On the twentieth of May!" ſighed Jaſper: "it is now the thirteenth. I ſhould like to witneſs this ſolemn anniverſary, for I knew poor Woodville."

Andrews ſtarted from his ſeat and exclaimed, "By G—, I thought ſo! I gueſſed that you were ſhipmates, by your being ſo inquiſitive about my Lady. Well, if ever you ſee him again, you may tell him that he has had ample vengeance, for ſhe has been the moſt wretched wife that ever the world ſaw, and has got the moſt churliſh huſband that ever diſgraced a parſon. He will ſhorten her days, I promiſe you."

"Heaven forbid!" ſighed Jaſper.

"Why, nobody will pity her," ſaid Andrews; "for falſehood in love ſeldom goes unpuniſhed, particularly where it is ſacrificed for gold. But will you ſee my Lady give alms: you never ſaw a prettier ſight in all your days. My Lady takes her ſeat on the bench

bench beneath the old mulberry-tree, and there ſhe beſtows her charity from ſun-riſe till noon on every body that comes to aſk it. It is called Woodville's *Adverſity*.

" Anniverſary, you would ſay."

" Yes, you are right, that is the word—Woodville's *Univerſity*—Then ſhe ſighs and looks as melancholy as a funeral. Indeed, one may ſay it is a ſolemn ceremony, where my Lady acts as chief mourner. You had better ſtay and ſee it."

" I wiſh I could !" ſaid Jaſper.

" Do," interrupted Andrews ; " I will give you a lodging till the day comes, and feed you into the bargain ; and who knows, if you bring tidings of Woodville, but my Lady may handſomely reward you."

" What I can tell her will avail but little, ſince ſhe is ſtill the wife of Sir Martin," ſaid Jaſper ; " yet I feel ſtrongly inclined to witneſs the ceremony, though I ſhould be loth to wound her already aching heart, by reminding it more forcibly of its unkindneſs."

" Stay, and try what Fortune may do for you. You are fair-ſpoken, and perhaps ſhe may better your condition."

"She cannot make me more wretched," ſaid Jaſper.

"Well, then, take courage. A few days reſt will recruit your ſtrength, and you will be able to tell my Lady all you know about Woodville."

"I will ſtay," ſaid Jaſper, but I cannot live upon your generoſity: if you can employ me with advantage to yourſelf, I will accept your offer,"

"We will talk of that to-morrow," replied Andrews, as he quitted the room to repleniſh the jug which they had emptied.

CHAP-

CHAPTER XIII.

THE evening paſſed chearfully. Woodville entertained his hoſt with the adventures of his various voyages, ſtill concealing the ſecret of his being the long-lamented object of Lady Strickland's ſorrows. Their chearful meal, ſpread before them with no ſparing hand, laſted till near midnight; for the mind of Andrews was eager after knowledge; and the eloquence of his world-weary hiſtorian made time paſs rapidly.

Jaſper found during the evening's converſation that Andrews was a bachelor, poſſeſſed of leſs than affluence, but more than ſufficient to exclude neceſſity: he was ſatisfied; and the moſt opulent might have envied that reconciling ſpirit, which taught him to know that independence is the firſt of human bleſſings.

On retiring to reſt, Woodville found a decent apartment, a clean bed, and a mind more tranquil

tranquil than it ever had been ſince that day, the commemoration of which he ſhortly purpoſed witneſſing. He laid his head for once upon a peaceful pillow, beneath the humble roof of genuine hoſpitality. He felt that the benefits he received did not originate in oſtentation; and he reſolved on proving, that the proudeſt ſenſation of a liberal mind is that which owes its origin to gratitude.

Nature, in her vaſt variety of works, never faſhioned a heart more perfect than that of Woodville. He was one of thoſe rare gems which Time diſplays amidſt an infinity of droſs; and to which, though Labour had not poliſhed it, innate qualities had given luſtre. Thoſe who have ſeen the fine effuſions of fancy, flowing with ſpontaneous grace from the mind of an uncultivated plough-boy; * thoſe who have traced the inſpired and glowing imagination of the unhappy Chatterton, will readily confeſs that Genius is an *innate* gift which will diſplay itſelf, though fortune, and even the poliſh of education, deny their

* Burns, the Scottiſh Poet, and our English Bloomfield.

tributes.

tributes. Such a being was the hero of this ſtory—ſuch was the ſcorned, the perſecuted, the neglected Woodville.

Three days elapſed and Woodville ſtill was Andrews's gueſt; every hour was employed in labour, for the little garden was ſcarcely cultivated, and a drain was then digging to carry off the ſtreams which with every ſummer ſhower ſwelled rapidly from the adjacent mountains. Woodville choſe the higheſt ground for the ſcene of his labour, becauſe he could from the acclivity perceive the diſtant woods, and the tall chimnies of Strickland-houſe. His toil was inceſſant; but it did not fatigue him; becauſe it was prompted by gratitude, and ſuſtained by hope.

THE

SAVAGE OF AVEYRON.

BY MRS. ROBINSON.

THE

SAVAGE OF AVEYRON.

THE following Poem, which by the *date* the Reader will perceive to have been written a very short time previous to the diſſolution of its excellent Author, will require no apology for its insertion in this publication. The correctness of the metre, and the plaintive harmony which pervades every stanza, clearly evinces the mild philosophy with which a strong mind can smooth its journey to the grave. This LAST offspring of Mrs. ROBINSON's Muse was produced at intervals of favourable symptoms of her fatal malady. The *subject* was *interesting to her heart*. She adopted it with all the enthuſiasm of mournful ANTICIPATION. The story first suggested itself to her after perusing various accounts of a SAVAGE BOY, lately discovered in the *Forest* of *Aveyron*, in the department of *Tarn*, and said

to be then existing at PARIS. Frequent instances of this kind have occurred in the history of Man, and conjecture has almost uniformly been bewildered respecting the origin of such fugitives. In countries where BANDITTI have been known to reside, imagination may be allowed the exercise of its powers; and Reason may ruminate on the possibility, as well as the probability, of such an interesting history as that of

"THE SAVAGE OF AVEYRON."

'TWAS in the mazes of a wood,
The lonely wood of AVEYRON,
I heard a melancholy tone,
It seem'd to freeze my blood!
A torrent tear was flowing fast,
And hollow was the morning blast,
As o'er the leafless woods it past,
While terror-fraught it stood!
O! mazy woods of AVEYRON!

O! wilds of dreary solitude!
Amid thy thorny alleys rude
I thought myself alone!
I thought no living thing could be
So weary of the world as me,
While on my winding path the pale moon shone.

Sometimes the tone was loud and sad,
And sometimes dulcet, faint and slow;
And then a tone of frantic woe,
It almost made me mad.
The burthen was "alone! alone!"
And then the heart did feebly groan,
Then suddenly a chearful tone
Proclaim'd a spirit glad!
"O! mazy woods of AVEYRON!
"O! wilds of dreary solitude,
"Amid your thorny alleys rude
"I wish'd myself---a traveller alone!

"Alone," I heard the wild boy say,
And swift he climb'd a blasted oak,
And there while Morning's herald woke,
He watch'd the opening day;
Yet dark and sunken was his eye,
Like a lorn maniac's, wild and shy,
And scowling like a winter's sky,
Without one beamy ray!
Then mazy woods of AVEYRON,
Then wilds of dreary solitude,
Amid thy thorny alleys rude,
I sigh'd to be—a traveller alone!

"*Alone! alone!*" I heard him shriek,
'Twas like the shriek of dying man!
And then to mutter he began,
But, O! *he could not speak!*
I saw him point to Heav'n, and sigh,
The big drop trembled in his eye,

And slowly from the yellow sky,
I saw the pale moon break:
I saw the woods of AVEYRON,
Their wilds of dreary solitude!
I mark'd their thorny alleys rude,
And wish'd to be a traveller alone!

His hair was long and black, and he
From infancy *alone* had been!
For since his fifth year he had seen
None mark'd his destiny!
No mortal ear had heard his groan,
For him no beam of hope had shone,
While sad he sigh'd—"*alone, alone!*"
Beneath the blasted tree!
And there, O! woods of AVEYRON!
O! wilds of dreary solitude!
Amid your thorny alleys rude,
I thought myself a traveller alone.

And now upon the blasted tree
He carv'd *three* notches, broad and long,
And all the while he sang a song
Of Nature's melody!
And tho' of words he little knew,
And tho' his dulcet tones were few,
Across the yielding bark he drew,
Deep sighing, notches THREE!
O! mazy woods of AVEYRON!
O! wilds of dreary solitude,
Amid your thorny alleys rude,
Upon this BLASTED OAK, no sun shone!

And now he pointed one, two, three,
And now he shriek'd with wild dismay!
And now he pac'd the thorny way,
Quitting the blasted tree.
It was a dark December morn,
The dew was frozen on the thorn,

But to a wretch so sad, so lorn,
All days alike would be!
Yet, mazy woods of AVEYRON!
Yet, wilds of dreary solitude!
Amid your frosty alleys rude,
I wish'd to be—a traveller alone!

I follow'd him along the wood,
To a small grot his hands had made,
Deep in a black rock's sullen shade,
Beside a tumbling flood!
Upon the earth I saw him spread,
Of wither'd *leaves* a narrow bed,
Yellow as gold, and streak'd with red;
They look'd like streaks of blood!
Fall'n from the woods of AVEYRON,
And scatter'd o'er the solitude
By midnight whirlwinds, strong and rude,
To pillow the scorch'd brain, that throbb'd alone!

Wild berries were his winter food,
With them his sallow lip was dy'd!
On chestnuts wild he fed beside,
Steep'd in the foamy flood.
Chequer'd with scars, his breast was seen,
Wounds, streaming fresh with anguish keen!
And marks where other wounds had been,
Torn by the brambles rude.
Such was the Boy of AVEYRON,
The tenant of that solitude,
Where still by misery unsubdu'd,
He wander'd *nine long winters*, all alone!

Before the step of his rude throne
The *squirrel* sported, tame and gay;
The *dormouse* slept its life away,
Nor heard his midnight groan:
About his form a garb he wore,
Ragged it was, and mark'd with gore;

And yet, whene'er 'twas folded o'er,
Full many a spangle shone!
Like little stars, O! AVEYRON!
They gleam'd amid thy solitude!
Or like, along thy alleys rude,
The summer dew-drops, sparkling in the sun!

It once had been a lady's vest,
White as the whitest mountain snow!
Till ruffian hands had taught to flow
The fountain of her breast!
Remembrance bade the WILD BOY trace
Her beauteous form, her angel face,
Her eye that beam'd with heavenly grace,
Her fainting voice, that blest!
When in the woods of AVEYRON,
Deep in their deepest solitude,
Three barb'rous ruffians shed her blood,
And mock'd, with cruel taunts, her dying groan.

Remembrance trac'd the summer bright,
When all the trees were fresh and green,
When lost the alleys long between,
The lady past the night;
She past the night bewilder'd wild,
She past it with her fearless child,
Who rais'd his little arms, and smil'd,
To see the morning light!
While in the woods of AVEYRON,
Beneath the broad oak's canopy,
She mark'd aghast the RUFFIANS THREE,
Waiting to seize the traveller alone!

Beneath the broad oak's canopy
The lovely lady's bones were laid;
But since that hour no breeze has play'd
About the blasted tree!
The leaves all wither'd ere the sun
His next day's rapid course had run,

And ere the summer day was done,
It winter seem'd to be!
And still, O! woods of AVEYRON,
Amid thy dreary solitude
The oak, a sapless trunk, has stood,
To mark the spot where MURDER foul was done!

From HER the WILD BOY learnt "ALONE:"
She tried to say, *my babe will die*;
But angels caught her parting sigh,
The BABE her *dying tone!*
And from that hour the BOY has been
Lord of the solitary scene,
Winding the dreary shades between,
Making his dismal moan!
Till, mazy woods of AVEYRON!
Dark wilds of dreary solitude!
Amid your thorny alleys rude,

I thought myself alone;
And could a wretch more wretched be,
More wild and fancy-fraught, than he,
Whose melancholy tale would pierce AN HEART OF STONE.

END OF VOL. III.

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